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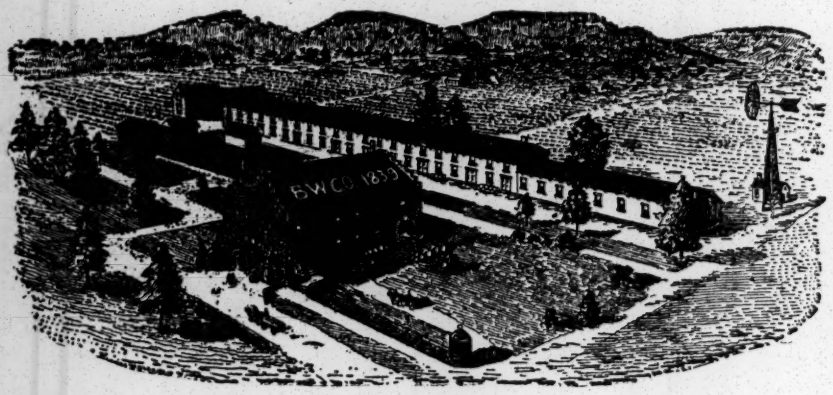

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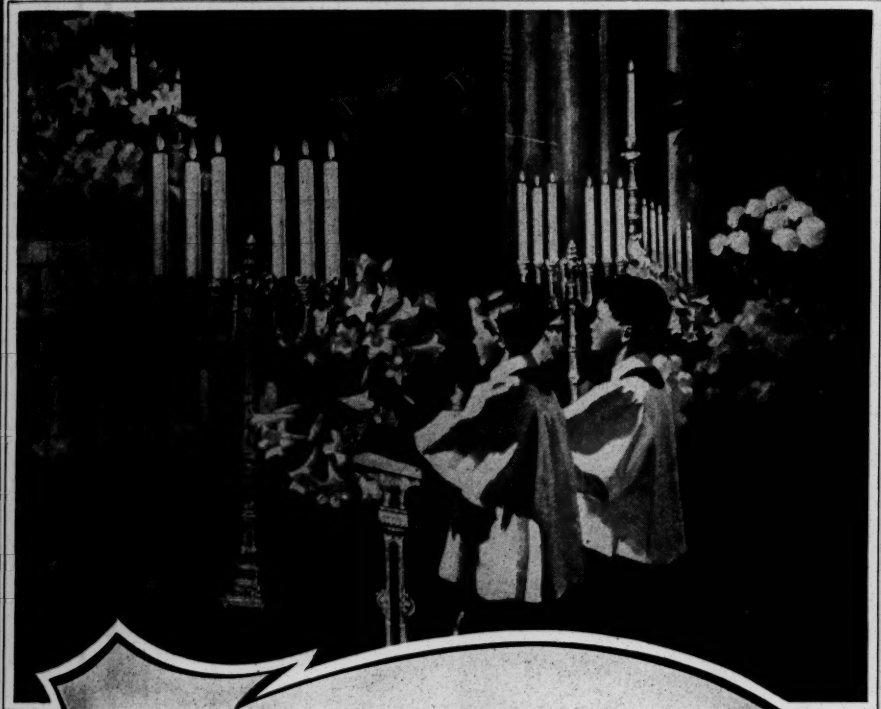

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THE
ECCLESIASTICAL REVIEW

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HER FIRSTBORN SON.

THE Catholic doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity has been denied by heretics since the fourth century, and often questioned by believing Christians, because of the Gospel texts in which Jesus is called her firstborn son. St. Matthew records that Joseph "did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn son" (1:25), and St. Luke tells us "she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger" (2:7).[1] Though Helvidius, a Roman priest of the fourth century, is usually considered the father of the heresy, it was not entirely unknown before his time.

The first Christian writer who mentions a denial of Mary's perpetual virginity is Origen (d. 255). Commenting on Elizabeth's greeting in Lk. 1:42-45, he writes: "Some one has gone to such madness as to say that the Savior repudiated His mother because, after His birth, she was joined to Joseph."[2] He admonishes the Christians, when they hear this heresy, to reply: "Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, said: Blessed art thou among women. If Mary is praised by the Holy Spirit, how

[1] Many question the genuinity of the word *prototokos*, "firstborn," in Mt. 1:25. The word is omitted in the fourth century Sinaitic and Vatican codices, in the Sahidic, Coptic and one Syrian version, and seems not to have been read in this text by some of the Fathers. The question is of little import from an exegetic viewpoint, for St. Luke certainly uses the term, and it is from his text that most critics argue.

[2] *In Luc. hom* 7. This "some one" may be Tertullian, the only one of Origen's predecessors, whose works have come down to us, who is under suspicion on this point. He is the only one from this period whom Helvidius could quote for his heresy, and St. Jerome concedes that he did deny the perpetual virginity. Moreover, Tertullian twice writes that Jesus repudiated His mother (*Car. Chr.*, 7; *Contra Marc.*, 4).

could the Savior repudiate her? " He adds that there is no proof that Mary was the mother of any child except Jesus. In a commentary on St. Matthew's Gospel he records a consideration presented in his day and repeated by later writers: " The body, chosen to minister to the Word, could not know union with man after the Holy Spirit came upon her and the power of the Most High overshadowed her." [3]

Almost a hundred years later, St. Hilary speaks of certain " irreligious persons, strangers to spiritual doctrine," who took occasion from St. Matthew, 1:18-25, to think basely of the Virgin Mary. Calling attention to the fact that she was espoused to St. Joseph when the angel appeared to him, St. Hilary says that there was a two-fold reason for the words by which the angel bade him to take Mary his wife: St. Joseph is to be a witness to her virginity and she is to be recognized as his wife. She, therefore, received the name " wife " and, acknowledged as his wife after the birth, remained the mother of Jesus alone. Touching briefly on the " brethren of the Lord," he says that they were the children of St. Joseph by a previous marriage, and offers in proof of Mary's virginity the fact that Jesus entrusted her to the care of St. John (Jo. 19:25-27).[4] Since St. Hilary wrote before the time of Helvidius and probably had not yet heard of the heresy that had just arisen in the East, it is impossible to determine the identity of these " irreligious persons."

St. Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis and Metropolitan of Crete, is more definite than Origen and St. Hilary. In his *Panarium Haeresis*, written in the second half of the fourth century, the 78th heresy is the denial of Mary's perpetual virginity, which he ascribes to the Antidicomarianites.[5] These men, he says,

[3] *In Mt.*, 13, 55. Mary's sanctity and her dignity as Mother of God, together with the holiness of St. Joseph and the revelation made to him, is presented as an argument for her perpetual virginity by St. Epiphanius, *Haer.* 78, 8; St. Jerome, *Adv. Helv.*, 8; St. Ambrose, *Exp. in Luc.*, II, 6: and St. Chrysostom, *In Matt.*, hom. 5.

[4] *Comm. in Matt.*, I, 3-5. The argument that Jesus would not have entrusted His mother to St. John if there were a family to fulfill this duty was also used by St. Epiphanius, *op. cit.*, 78, 10; St. Jerome, *op. cit.*, 13; St. Ambrose, *de Instit. Virg.*, 7, 48; and St. Chrysostom, *op. cit.*, 5, 3.

[5] This name, meaning " opponents of Mary," was first used by St. Epiphanius. From the manner in which he speaks of them, they seem to have professed faith in the Virgin-Birth of Jesus and, on this point, differed from the Ebionites, a Judeo-Christian group, who denied the Virgin-Birth and are refuted by St. Epiphanius, *op. cit.*, 30. They may have been an off-shoot of the Nazarenes, another Judeo-

hated the Virgin and desired to tarnish her glory by saying that she and Joseph lived together as husband and wife after the birth of Jesus. In refutation of the heresy, he reproduces a letter he had previously written while in Arabia. This letter reveals that the basis for the attack upon the doctrine was St. Matthew's narrative and the so-called " brethren of the Lord."

At about the same time, Helvidius published a pamphlet in which the same arguments were used in an attack upon Mary's perpetual virginity. He was answered by St. Jerome in 383, in his justly celebrated *Adversus Helvidium*. A more moderate, but very lofty protest, *De Institutione Virginis*, was penned by St. Ambrose when the heresy found its way into northern Italy through the teaching of Bonosus, Bishop of Sardica. Both Fathers profess a reluctance to speak of the matter. St. Jerome says he deferred replying to the " blasphemy " of Helvidius, lest the latter appear worthy of refutation; but he was moved to write because of the scandal caused by the heretic. St. Ambrose declares that he would prefer to remain silent concerning this " sacrilege," but since a Bishop was convicted of the same impiety, he deemed it necessary to condemn him publicly. Both Fathers record the arguments of the adversaries, which have remained the same even to this day, but St Jerome has given a more detailed refutation from the Scriptures. This paper will discuss the arguments taken from the two texts mentioned in the opening paragraph.

Purpose of Matthew 1:18-25.

A discussion of Mt. 1:25 must take into consideration the meaning of terms and the purpose of the narrative in which this text is contained. The event recorded—the angel's appearance to St. Joseph—took place " before they came together " (v. 18). This phrase is explained by some as denoting marital relations, by others correctly as meaning dwelling in the same home. Though the Greek verb used here may have either signification,[6] its use in the New Testament and the present context make it evident that it here refers to the time before Mary was introduced into the home of St Joseph.

Christian group, who professed faith in the Virgin-Birth and originally seem to have been orthodox except in adherence to practices of the Mosaic Law. On these sects of the early Church, see Tixeront, *History of Dogmas*, I, p. 159 sq.

[6] The verb occurs 34 times in the New Testament (Young, *Anal. Conc.*), but only once does it mean marital relations, and this one text is a variant reading (Zorell, N. T. *Lex. Graec.*)

At the time Mary was bethrothed, promised in marriage to St. Joseph. St. Matthew is writing according to the laws and viewpoint of the people for whom his Gospel was intended, the Jews of the first century. According to this viewpoint, supported by the Old Testament (v.g. Dt. 22:24 sq.), betrothment was more than our " engagement." It was the initiation of marriage, constituting a valid natural contract, and a betrothed maiden had the legal standing of a wife. Between the betrothal and the nuptials, whose essence consisted in conducting the bride to her new home and the marriage feast, the bride remained at the home of her parents or guardians. It was during this time that the Incarnation took place and, to solve the quandary in which this mystery had placed St. Joseph, an angel is sent to make known the virginal conception. The angel admonished St. Joseph: " take to thee Mary thy wife " ; and obedient to the command of the Lord, he " took unto him his wife." The simple statement of the course of events is sufficiently clear. After the betrothal, she conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit; and after the message of the angel explaining the miracle, St. Joseph took her into his own home.[7]

Mary and Joseph were truly husband and wife. Interpreting " came together " as marital relations and calling attention to the fact that Mary is first called " betrothed " and then " wife," Helvidius claimed that these expressions were proof against Mary's perpetual virginity. St. Jerome concedes the explanation of " came together," but denies that " before " demands an " afterwards " (*op. cit.*, 4). St. Ambrose, answering a similar argument, refutes it on the principle that marriage is constituted by the mutual consent of the parties, not by marital relations. " Virgin " and " wife " are not irreconcilable concepts, for a maiden becomes a wife as soon as the matrimonial consent is duly given; and she remains a wife even if the marriage is never consummated.[8] Though some, following St. Epi-

7 Cf. Fillion, *Life of Christ*, I, 279 sq.; Lagrange, *Gospel of Jesus Christ*, I, 28 sq. The former, inclining to the view of St. Ambrose, says: " Joseph knew Mary, her virtues, the purity of her soul and life; yet the plain facts spoke against her." Lagrange, embracing the explanation of St. Jerome, says that Joseph had no doubts concerning Mary's integrity, but was confronted with a situation he did not understand, and passed no judgment. His resolve is not made from a desire of protecting one he deemed guilty, but from a desire of preventing the possibility of others suspecting her whom he considered innocent.

8 " Non enim defloratio virginitatis facit conjugium, sed pactio conjugalis " (*Op. cit.*, 6, 41).

phanius (*op. cit.*, 78, 20), have understood " did not know her " of intellectual or spiritual knowledge, the phrase denotes here, as in similar texts, the consummation of marriage.

St. Matthew adds what many consider a limitation on the non-consummation of the marriage, when he says: " He did not know her till she had brought forth her son." St. Jerome records the argument that has remained standard among the followers of Helvidius: " The adverb till signifies a definite time, and when this time is completed there occurs what is said not to have taken place during the prescribed time." This mode of argumentation, says St. Jerome, is refuted both by the Scriptures and by the ordinary mode of speech among men. We confine ourselves to a summary of his refutation from the Scriptures (*op. cit.*, 5-7). The adverb till often designates a limited period, but it also frequently designates unlimited time. God said through the prophet: " Even till your old age, I am the same " (Is. 46:4). Will He cease to be God when they have grown old? Christ said to the Apostles: " I am with you even to the consummation of the world " (Mt. 29:38). Will He desert them at the end of the world? St. Paul, referring to Psalm 109, said of Christ: " He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet " (I Cor. 15:35). Is the Lord to reign only until His enemies are overcome? David said: " Our eyes are on the Lord till He have mercy on us " (Ps. 122:5). When he has obtained mercy will he cease looking to the Lord? Such texts might be multiplied many times, but St. Jerome contents himself with adding a large group of texts which speak of certain localities. Frequently the Old Testament states that a certain site has received a name or that it is unknown " till this day," i. e., till the time the author wrote. Must we infer that these sites received a new name or were discovered after the book was written, or must we understand the author to declare that a change would take place after he has written? Does not *till* signify what took place or did not take place up to a certain point, without making any declaration on what occurred afterwards?

St. Chrysostom and St. Ambrose reply to the Helvidians in the same manner, but enhance the argument and strengthen Catholic interpretation by emphasizing the purpose of the Gospel narrative. St. Chrysostom states that the Evangelist used the

word *till*, not to infer that he " knew " her afterwards, but that the reader might know with certainty that Mary was an intact Virgin before the birth of Jesus. St. Matthew is wholly concerned with the miraculous conception and birth of the Savior, making certain of what preceded it and leaving us to understand what follows from this truth—Jesus is the only son of Mary (*op. cit.*, 5, 3). The narrative demonstrates that the prophecy of Isaias was fulfilled; and in doing so, affirms in the strongest language possible that Jesus was born of a virgin. Having this purpose in mind, the Evangelist confines himself to what concerns this particular truth and prescinds from all other considerations. He thus follows the usual procedure; for, as St. Ambrose says, one who undertakes to demonstrate a certain point is satisfied when he has set forth all that pertains to the matter in hand. And St. Matthew, " who undertook to prove the mystery of the incorrupt Incarnation, did not think that the testimony of Mary's virginity should be developed at greater length, lest he appear to be a defender of the Virgin rather than a narrator of the mystery." But, the Saint adds: " When he taught that Joseph was a just man, he sufficiently declared that he could not violate the Temple of the Holy Spirit, the womb of mystery, the mother of his Lord " (*Exp. in Luc.*, II, 6; cf. *Inst. Virg.*, 5, 36-38).

Without doubt St. Matthew confined the scope of his narrative to what preceded the birth of Jesus, as conceded by many opponents of Mary's perpetual virginity. If, then, he designates Jesus the " firstborn," this term carries no implication of subsequent children, but denies antecedent children.

Significance of " Firstborn ".

According to St. Jerome, Helvidius explained " firstborn " in the following manner: " Only he who has brothers can be called a firstborn son, just as he who is the only son of his parents is called the only-born " (*Op. cit.*, 9). This explanation is adopted in one form or another by his followers even to this day. As if an inner contradiction existed between *firstborn* and *only-born*, they repeat the age-old dictum: If the first, not the only; if the only, not the first. Again, it is said that the word *firstborn* naturally supposes and implies subsequent children. Still others say that St. Luke should have used the term *only-born*

if no other children were born of Mary; and since he did not, such children were born. Briefly, the opponents of Mary's perpetual virginity say that the firstborn son is the beginning of a series of children and this is the only meaning that can be given the term in Luke 2:7.[9]

The first error in such reasoning is its ignoring of the fact that St. Luke gives the definition of *firstborn* when recording the presentation of the child Jesus in the Temple (2:22-24). Jesus was presented to the Lord forty days after birth in compliance with the Law of Moses, quoted by St. Luke: " Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord " (Ex. 13:2). These words contain at least an implied definition of *firstborn.* He is one who " opens the womb," a male son before whom no other child is born of his mother; he is first absolutely, not first in relation to others. St. Luke would certainly have this definition in mind when, a few pages earlier, he recorded that " she brought forth her firstborn son." [10]

Secondly, the reasoning of critics that *firstborn* implies subsequent births and that an only son cannot be called firstborn errs in disregarding Scripture's definition of the term. Permitting the Scripture to define its own terms, we can say with St. Jerome: " Every only-son is also a firstborn son; but not every firstborn is the only son. A firstborn son is not only one after whom others were born, but one before whom no other was born " (*op. cit.*, 10). That this statement gives the correct meaning of the term is easily proved from the Old Testament. In various places God demands that the Israelites consecrate to Him, or redeem from Him, every firstborn of men and animals. In the Hebrew text *firstborn* is represented by *Bekor,* translated with *prototokos* by the Septuagint. In the wording of the Law, the *bekor* or firstborn is always *that which opens the womb,*

[9] Thus Holtzman, *Hand-Kommentar,* I, 318: " The term proves that our Evangelist (St. Luke) saw in Jesus the eldest of a series of brothers and sisters. For here applies what Lucien said: If the first, not the only; if the only, not the first." Mayor in Hasting's *Dict. of the Bible,* I, 323: " The natural conclusion drawn from the use of the word *firstborn* in Lk. 2:7 is that other brothers or sisters were born later. If not, why did not the Evangelist employ the word *only-born?* " Plummer, *Crit. and Exeget. Comm.*, 53: " It implies the possibility of subsequent children, and when Luke wrote, this possibility had been decided. Would he have used such an expression, if it was known that Mary never had another child."

[10] St. Luke, writing according to a pre-conceived plan, is simply preparing the way for what he has to say later concerning the offering of the firstborn in the Temple "—Lagrange, *op. cit.*, I, p. 37.

which means that none had come from the womb before this one and, therefore, neither implies nor supposes subsequent births.[11] Clearly, an only child, if a son, is also a firstborn son.

St. Jerome takes another argument from the law requiring the redemption of the firstborn (*bekor*) after one month (Num. 18:16). If the firstborn is the beginning of a series, he says, the Law could not require the redemption until other children were born. For, if these others are required to make this one the firstborn, one could argue against the Law: " Why limit me to the short space of one month? Why call this one firstborn, when I do not know whether others will follow? Wait until the second is born, for I owe nothing until that one is born by whom this one becomes firstborn." The very letters of the Law, he remarks, would cry out against such argumentation. Since he who as yet has neither brothers nor sisters is bound by the law, it follows that the firstborn is one who opens the womb, before whom there was none.

If the first child in a family was a son, he was called *firstborn* and possessed certain privileges inherent in the title from the moment of his birth. From that same moment his parents incurred certain obligations imposed by the Law. As the title, with its privileges and duties, was bestowed on the son without reference to subsequent children, so also did the son retain the title even if no other children were born of his mother. It is evident that, in the language of the Scriptures, Jesus who was the only child of Mary is rightly called " her firstborn son," without any detriment to the doctrine of the perpetual virginity.

This meaning of *firstborn* is not confined to the Mosaic Legislation. Because Israel was chosen out of all other peoples and received special favors and privileges, God called the nation " my son, my firstborn " (Ex. 4:22; cf. Jer. 31:9). Though the New Testament teaches that Israel was not the only choice of God, yet the Old Testament did not take other peoples into consideration. Israel is unique, the only one chosen, and is called the " firstborn." This equivalence of " only " with " firstborn " is also found in Jewish literature of the time of Christ.

[11] Ex. 13:2, 13:12-15, 22:29, 34:19-20; Num. 3:12, 8:16, 18:15-17. The regulations were: The firstborn of clean animals were to be offered in sacrifice; the firstborn of other animals and the firstborn of men were to be redeemed by an offering made to the priests. The obligation of " redeeming " began to urge a month after the birth.

The fourth book of Esdras,[12] speaking of Israel's punishment, laments: "Thou hast acquired for thyself one people, and thou hast given this people whom thou lovest a law . . . Thou hast dispersed thy only one" (5, 27-28). Israel is the *only one*, but the same author also writes: "We are thy people, whom thou hast called thy firstborn, thy only son" (6:58). The Psalms of Solomon and the Book of Jubilees, two Jewish works of the first century before Christ,[13] also declare Israel to be the only as well as the firstborn.

A further striking proof that *firstborn son* did not imply subsequent children is afforded by a Jewish epitaph from Tell el Yehoudieh (Leontopolis) in Egypt. Dated the 2nd of Mechir in the 25th year of Augustus (Jan. 28, 5 B. C.), the inscription bewails the misfortune of a young Jewish matron who died at the birth of her firstborn son. The epitaph says:

> This, O wayfarer, is the tomb of Arsinoe. Weep while thinking of a most unhappy, unfortunate, ill-fated one. For, when very young, I was orphaned of my mother. And when the bloom of youth decked me in bridal array, my father Phabeiti gave me in marriage. But during the pangs of giving birth to my firstborn son, fate brought me to the end of life. Short, indeed, the span of life allotted me, but a more excellent favor was granted me, beauty of soul. The tomb conceals in its bosom my body, nourished in cleanness, but my soul has gone to the blessed.[14]

This firstborn son was both the first and the only child of his mother. The term, therefore, designates a son before whom there was no other child, and any reference to subsequent children is positively excluded by the circumstances. The Jews of Egypt, in the time of our Lord, used the term *firstborn* in the same sense as their contemporaries in Palestine; and both used the term in the same sense that the Septuagint Version translated *bekor* of the Old Testament. In the Scriptures and in popular usage, therefore, *firstborn* simply means: "a male son before

[12] This apocryphal work is preserved in the appendix to the Vulgate. The body of the book (cc. 3-14) was composed by a pious Jew towards the end of the first century. The author, who most probably wrote in Hebrew, made use of earlier sources. Cf. Szekely, *Bibl. Apocr.*, I, 315.

[13] Cf. Szekely, *op. cit.*, I, 329 sq., 422 sq.

[14] Cf. Frey, *Biblica*, vol. II (1930), no. 4, 358 sq.

whom no child was born of his mother " ; it does not " naturally suppose " that any others were born afterwards; and it proves that an *only-born* is also a *firstborn*.

The Apostolic Tradition.

The fourth century opponents of the Helvidian innovation appealed to the doctrine handed down from the Apostles. St. Epiphanius states the fact in this manner: " Who, at any time in any generation, has ventured to utter the name of Blessed Mary and, being asked, did not immediately add *The Virgin*? For, from this added epithet there shines forth a token of her dignity." In times past, he continues, just men were given titles of dignity as each deserved; " so also, Blessed Mary was called *The Virgin*, and this title was never changed (*op. cit.*, 78, 5-6).

Helvidius named two writers of the first centuries, Tertullian and St. Victorinus of Pettau, and asserted that they had spoken of the brothers and sisters of Jesus, children of Mary. St. Jerome concedes him Tertullian, for " he was not a man of the Church." But he emphatically denies that St. Victorinus, whose works he knew, had spoken of the " brethren of the Lord " as children of Mary. In proof of Catholic doctrine he could " cite a whole series of ancient writers: Ignatius, Polycarp, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, and many other apostolic and eloquent men " (*op. cit.*, 17).

St. Jerome cites but four second-century writers by name, but to their number must be added the early Creeds and Professions of Faith, as well as all other writers of the first three centuries. Some of these, as St. Justin and St. Irenaeus, defended the Virgin-Birth of Jesus against those who said He was mere man, the son of Joseph and Mary. This was the only doctrine touching Mary's virginity that was attacked during the first centuries. Defense of this doctrine carried with it a defense of Mary's perpetual virginity, since the early Church recognized that Jesus was the only son of Mary.

The conclusion is substantiated by two facts. No trace of a denial of Mary's perpetual virginity is found until the third century. Christians of the preceding centuries understood that the so-called " brethren of the Lord " were relatives; and the explanations of this relationship are given, not as a solution of a difficulty, but as a statement of fact. The earliest explanation

was given by Hegesippus who states that they were cousins of the Lord. Later, towards the end of the second century, the apocryphal gospels of Peter and James look upon them as children of St. Joseph by a previous marriage.[15] When the Helvidians of the fourth century claimed that the " brethren " were children of Mary, the Fathers of the time either accepted one of the two explanations given in the second century or simply maintained that the term " brethren " has so many significations in the Scriptures that no argument against Mary's virginity can be drawn from the use of the term.[16] A second fact is the title " Mary the Virgin," given her during the first centuries. This appellation, as St. Epiphanius points out, declares her characteristic honor and was given her constantly and universally from the very beginning. Such would not have been possible had not the first Christians known that Jesus was her only child and that the " brethren " were not her children.

The testimony becomes more direct and explicit in the fourth century, partly because of the attacks made upon the doctrine. The title *Ever-Virgin,* previously given those who vowed virginity or who had remained virgins till death, was now reserved for Mary alone. Its widespread use is attested by Didymus the Blind, a contemporary of Helvidius, and by Saints Athanasius, Epiphanius and Ephraem, his predecessors.

Didymus and, before him, St. Athanasius speak of Mary Ever-Virgin while defending the Divinity of Christ and without any reference to any controversy, thus giving testimony to the deep rooted faith of the Alexandrian Church. Thus, St. Athanasius simply states: " Let those who deny that the Son is from the Father by nature and proper to His substance, deny also that He took true human flesh of *Mary Ever-Virgin;* for in neither case would it have been of profit for us " (*Adv. Ar. Orr.,* II, 70). Didymus, commenting on 1 Tim. 3:16, writes: " St. Paul says He was preached in the world and believed, because He who

[15] Cf. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.,* 2, 23; 3, 11; 4, 22; Rauschen-Wittig, *Grundriss der Patr.,* 26; Bardenhewer, *Gesch. der altk. Litt.,* I, 385, 524, 533; Durand, *Childhood of Jesus Christ,* p. 259 sq., who remarks that Mary's perpetual virginity and the exact relationship of the " brethren " are two distinct questions.

[16] The appellation *brethren* in Scripture may rest on four different titles: nature, nationality, relationship, friendship. These considerations help judge the truthfulness of the statement in the American edition of *Hastings Dictionary,* p. 104, that the two explanations mentioned were made " in the interests of the notion of Mary's perpetual virginity."

shone forth eternally in the ineffable light was, in these last days, through His benignity born of *the Ever-Virgin*" (*De Trin.*, II, 27). More remarkable is his appeal to this doctrine in answering the Arian objection taken from the words: "Firstborn of creatures," in Col. 1:15. After explaining the text, he concludes that this title does not mean that Jesus is merely one of many, nor does it contradict His divinity as expressed by "Only-Begotten of the Father." This conclusion, he says, is supported by St. Matthew who designates Jesus "the firstborn son" of Mary, who "remained ever and at all times an immaculate virgin," whence it is seen that *firstborn* does not contradict *only-begotten* (*ib.*, III, 4).

Besides defending the doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity and giving her the title *Ever-Virgin*, St. Epiphanius has included in the *Ancoratus*, 120, a Symbol of faith which was proposed to catechumens in the Oriental Church and which likewise contains the title. The Symbol explains "incarnated" thus: "Born of Blessed Mary *Ever-Virgin*, through the Holy Spirit, He was made man."

In this century, before the time of Helvidius and without any reference to his teaching, Mary's prepetual virginity was taught in the precise terms in which it was later defined as a dogma of faith. St. Zeno, eighth Bishop of Verona (c. 365), exclaims in a sermon on the Nativity: "O magnum sacramentum! Maria virgo incorrupta concepit, post conceptum virgo peperit, post partum virgo permansit." [17] St. Ephraem of Syria, designating Mary *The Ever-Virgin*, says in his Sermon *de laudibus*: "Thou didst bring forth God and Man, being a virgin before the birth, a virgin in the birth, a virgin after the birth." An indication that this doctrine was in quiet possession is seen in the frequency with which St. Ephraem refers to it, without the least indication of any doubt to the contrary and in places where one might least expect it. Thus, he appeals to it in a sermon against the Manichaeans who, apparently in support of their heresy, claimed that Satan at one time caused women to bear children without the intervention of men. The Saint replies that this is contrary to all human experience and to the laws of biology In truth, he says, Satan would do this now, if it were possible, in order that he might have something to oppose to Mary "who was a mother

[17] *Tract.*, II, 8, 2; cf. I, 5, 7; II, 9, 1; II, 19, 20.

and remained a virgin." For, Satan has imitated holy men and every virtue to lead men into error. " He counterfeited everything that is excellent, but he could not make an imitation of the Virgin Mother. Our virgin is above his cunning; he has no one similar to her who united virginity with fecundity." [18]

The faith of the first three centuries may be stated as follows: But for a few isolated exceptions, no one denied that Jesus was the only child of His Virgin-Mother; the Christians of these centuries understood the language of the Scriptures, knew all the facts concerning the " brethren of the Lord," and paid heed to considerations such as pointed out above in notes 3 and 4. It was only when the language of the Scriptures was obscured and knowledge of the facts became dimmed that Helvidius and others found a hearing in the fourth century. The faith of the Church, however, was then so strong that all Christendom united in condemning the Helvidian teaching as an impious, heretical, blasphemous and sacrilegious novelty.

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[18] Sermon 110 *de Fide.* The same doctrine is contained in Sermons 10 and 15 *de Mysteriis,* 148 *de Fide,* in a eulogy on Abraham and Isaac, and in his hymns and prayers. Citations given here are from vols. 4 and 8 of *S. P. N. Ephraemi, Syri, Opera,* ed. Cailau-Gillon.

A CATECHISM FOR PASTORS ON THE INSTRUCTIO OF THE SACRED CONGREGATION OF THE SACRAMENTS.

THE Instruction of the Sacred Congregation of the Sacraments issued 29 June, 1941, and entitled *Norms To Be Observed By The Pastor In Conducting The Canonical Investigations Before Candidates Are Admitted To Marriage*, has already been put into practice by some dioceses.[1] Other dioceses are making preparations for its observance. Sooner or later the pastors of the country will be following this universally required procedure as the local Ordinaries prescribe the special regulations for prenuptial investigations.[2] For the convenience of the pastor then this catechism on the Instruction is prepared without prejudice to the special diocesan regulations [3] which are or may in the future be demanded by the Ordinaries in their respective dioceses. The questions and answers are based entirely on the Instruction.

1. When was the Instruction issued? June 29, 1941.[4]
2. Where may an English translation of the Instruction be obtained? THE ECCLESIASTICAL REVIEW for November, 1941, p. 371 sq. contains the Instruction with the Appendix of five sample forms. Reprints of the Instruction are obtainable from the publishers.
3. Does the Instruction introduce an entirely new procedure? The Instruction reaffirms the regulations issued by the Congregation of the Sacraments March 6, 1911;[5] the general legislation of the Code; [6] and the Instructions of 4 July, 1921; [7] and adds some new regulations.
4. What new regulations does the Instruction demand? The Instruction demands these new regulations:

[1] Among the places already observing the Instruction are: Camden, Chicago, Covington, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, New York, Ogdensburg, St. Paul, Springfield, Mass., Syracuse.

[2] Canon 1020-3.

[3] Chicago, Detroit, and Springfield, have special diocesan regulations.

[4] AAS, XXXIII, 1941, 297 sq.

[5] AAS, III, 1911, 102.

[6] Canons 1019-1034.

[7] AAS, XIII, 1921, 348.

a) A set form for conducting and recording all prenuptial investigations;

b) a procedure to be observed in the exchange of the documents of investigation when the couple are of different dioceses;

c) the necessity of the *nihil obstat* of the local Chancery secured by the local pastor who is to assist at the marriage of a couple who are residents of different dioceses;

d) the written acknowledgment of the marriage notification by the pastors of the parishes of baptism;

e) an inspection and check, at least annually, by the Ordinary, of the parochial and baptismal records and an annual report on this matter to the Congregation of the Sacraments.

5. What pastor has the right and duty of instituting the prenuptial investigations? The investigation is primarily the right and duty of the pastor who is entitled by law to assist at the marriage.[8]

6. What pastor is this? Unless just cause excuses this is the pastor of the bride.[9]

7. What points are to be covered in the examination? Inquiry is to be made on those points contained in the questionnaire which the Ordinary will provide for his respective diocese.

8. On what will the diocesan form be based? Ordinaries will follow the sample form given as Form I in the Appendix of the Instruction.[10]

9. Will the forms be the same in every diocese? Practically the same, though the local Ordinary may omit or add questions according to local conditions.

10. Must this form be used in every case? Yes. The parties, whether Catholic or non-Catholic, to

[8] Canons 1094-1099.

[9] In marriages of Catholics of mixed *rites* the marriage takes place in the rite and parish of the man (Can. 1097-2). Where one of the parties is a Greek Ruthenian, the Holy See has stated that in the U. S. the marriage is to be celebrated in the rite of the bride and before her pastor (S. C. Orient., Nov. 23, 1940; *The Jurist*, 1 July, 1941, 267). In marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics the pastor of the Catholic party will assist.

[10] *Ecclesiastical Review*, CV-Nov. 1941, 384.

every marriage are to be placed under oath and questioned *separately* and carefully, distinctly and discreetly, on the points contained in the diocesan questionnaire.

11. From whom may a dispensation from the use of the form in a particular case be obtained?
From the local Ordinary.

12. Should the local diocesan form be sent to a priest outside the local diocese when requesting his aid in an investigation?
Yes, the local form of the place where the marriage is to occur should be used.

13. Must this form be sent through the local curia to the priest outside the diocese?
The Instruction does not demand that the form be sent through the local Chancery.[11]

14. Will the out-of-the-diocese priest return the completed form directly to the pastor from whom he received it?
No. The out-of-the-diocese priest must return the papers through his own (out-of-the-diocese) Chancery.

15. Is the prenuptial investigation exclusively the right and duty of the pastor of the bride?
No. The pastor of the groom, on his own initiative, or at the request of the groom or the pastor of the bride, shall also conduct an examination as to the groom's freedom to marry.

16. May the pastor request the assistance of other pastors in making the investigation? Yes.

17. What is required by the Instruction when a pastor of diocese X is to assist in his own parish at the wedding of a couple both of whom belong to his parish?
The *nihil obstat* of the local curia is not demanded. The pastor having made the customary investigation, files the papers in his own parish archives.

18. What is the procedure for a pastor of diocese X, who is to assist at the wedding in his own parish of a parishioner with a person having a residence in diocese X?

[11] The Diocese of Springfield, Mass., has this regulation: "All communications with priests outside the Diocese must be carried on through the Chancery."

The pastor makes the investigation himself or with the aid of the pastor of the other party. The documents of investigation together with any necessary papers (e. g., baptismal record, etc.) will be exchanged *directly* between these pastors of the same diocese X without the intermediary services of the local chancery of diocese X. The Instruction does not require the *nihil obstat* for these marriages of couples residing in the same diocese.[12]

19. What procedure is to be observed by a pastor of diocese X when he is to assist in his own parish at a marriage of one of his parishioners with a person having a residence in diocese Y?

The pastor of diocese X will send the regular diocesan form requesting the pastor of the other party in diocese Y to institute the prenuptial investigation. The out-of-the-diocese pastor upon completing the investigation will transmit his reply along with other necessary documents (e. g., baptismal record, etc.) to the Chancery of diocese Y. The Chancery of diocese Y will forward these papers with a testimonial letter as to the other party's freedom to marry, to the pastor of diocese X who is to perform the ceremony.

Upon receipt of these papers from Chancery Y, the pastor in diocese X will send these documents together with all the papers he himself has collected on this marriage and an appended precis or transcript of the necessary data (as given in sample form V of the Instruction)[13] to his own Chancery of diocese X.

The Chancery of diocese X will return the *nihil obstat* or permission to proceed with the marriage. The papers returned by the Chancery of diocese X will be filed permanently in the archives of the parish where the wedding takes place.

20. Is the *nihil obstat* necessary when the parties to the marriage are residents of different dioceses?

Yes, the Instruction demands the *nihil obstat* of the local

[12] The S.C.S. greatly desires the *nihil obstat* in intra-diocesan marriages but only demands the *nihil obstat* when the pastors of the couple are of different dioceses.

[13] ECCLESIASTICAL REVIEW, CV, Nov. 1941, 393.

curia in all cases where the parties belong to different dioceses.

21. What is the *nihil obstat*?
The *nihil obstat* is simply the license or permission of the local curia to proceed with a marriage since from an examination of the papers submitted, the local curia finds no obstacle to its licit and valid celebration.

22. Does this *nihil obstat* grant delegation, properly so called, to the priest who is to assist at the wedding?
No, the *nihil obstat* does not grant delegation. The qualifications of Canons 1094-1099 must be possessed by the priest who assists at the marriage.

23. What procedure will be observed by a pastor of diocese X when requested by a pastor of diocese Y to aid in the prenuptial investigation of a marriage which is to take place in diocese Y?
Upon the completion of the investigation, the pastor of diocese X will send the results of the investigation along with any other necessary document (e. g., baptismal record) to the Chancery of diocese X. The Chancery of diocese X will send the papers with a testimonial letter of freedom to marry to the pastor in diocese Y.

24. What is the procedure for a pastor of diocese X when one of his parishioners is to marry a person from diocese Y; and the marriage is to take place *outside* the proper parishes of either party?
In this case the pastor of diocese X carries out the prenuptial investigation just as if the marriage of his parishioner with the person from outside diocese X were to take place in the pastor's own parish (cf. Q. 19, supra). When the *nihil obstat* of the Chancery of diocese X is returned, the pastor of diocese X signs and seals the transcript in the place provided for him, giving his permission or license (not his delegation) to any priest, otherwise endowed with the proper faculties, to assist at this wedding which is to take place *outside* the parish of the pastor of diocese X. The papers are then sent to the priest who is to perform the ceremony.

25. Will the pastor of diocese X have to specify to what particular priest he gives his permission?
No. The permission is indefinite. It is not a question of delegation.

26. When should the pastor of diocese X send these papers to the priest who is to assist at the marriage in some other place?
All documents relative to the marriage should reach the priest who is to assist at the marriage at least three days before the wedding date.

27. What obligation does the Instruction place upon this other priest who assists at the marriage?
The priest who assists at the wedding does not need the *nihil obstat* of the local curia. The priest will state in the place designated on the documents that he performed the ceremony at a certain date in a certain parish and diocese, sign the same and see that the papers are filed permanently in the archives of the parish where the marriage took place.

28. What is meant by the proper pastor of the bride and the proper pastor of the groom?
The parties to the marriage obtain their proper pastors by reason of domicile, quasi-domicile, or month's residence in a parish. Vagi obtain their proper pastor by actual presence in a parish.[14]

29. If the couple no longer are residents of the parishes of their baptisms must the baptismal records be transmitted through the Chanceries of the dioceses of baptisms?
No. The Instruction demands the transmission of documents through the Chancery where the proper pastors of the couple are of different dioceses. The distinction is based on the present residence of the parties not the place of their baptisms.

30. How serious is the obligation to make the prenuptial investigations?
The obligation binds the pastor entitled by law to assist at the marriage, *sub gravi* and personally and is obligatory

[14] Canon 1097-1-2.

even though the pastor is morally certain there is no obstacle to a valid and licit marriage.[15]

31. What if one or both parties claim to have been freed from a previous marriage by: a) death of former spouse; b) declaration of nullity by competent ecclesiastical authority; c) dispensation from a *matrimonium ratum et non consummatum*? Legitimate documents must be obtained in each instance.

32. What if there is only the species of a previous marriage which to the pastor's mind is evidently null?
Unless the parties present legitimate ecclesiastical documents, the pastor will refer any case involving a previous marriage to his Chancery.

33. Must a baptismal certificate be obtained?
Yes, but lacking this, other legitimate proofs of baptism may be admitted.[16]

34. What qualities should this baptismal certificate have?
The certificate of baptism should be recent, i. e., issued within the past six months and contain such annotations as the law demands.[17]

35. What if the pastor encounters delays and difficulties in assembling the documents, especially from outside the diocese?
The difficulty may be overcome by requesting the documents from the diocesan chanceries of the parties.

36. Does not the suppletory oath [18] provided in Form IV of the Appendix to the Instruction suffice to assure the freedom of the parties to marry?
Only after other sources of information have failed should resort be had to this oath.

37. Why should special care be exercised in ascertaining the sort of matrimonial consent the parties intend to give?
In our time and circumstances there is grave danger of an invalid union being contracted for one or both parties

[15] Donovan, *The Pastor's Obligation in Pre-Nuptial Investigation*, p. 83.

[16] Canon 779.

[17] Canon 470-2; Art. 225-1, *Instr.* S.C.S. Aug. 15, 1936.

[18] Canons 1829-1830.

may by a positive will act exclude marriage itself, or all right to the conjugal act, or any essential property of matrimony.[19]

38. What record of the marriage is to be made other than the entry in the matrimonial register of the parish in which the marriage was contracted?
The pastor who assisted at the marriage will at once make a notation of the marriage on the baptismal records of the parties if they had been baptized in his parish.[20]

39. What if the parties to the marriage had been baptized in other parishes?
The pastor who performed the ceremony shall as soon as possible send a notification of the marriage to the pastors of the places of baptism.

40. What is required of these pastors of the places of baptism?
Besides making a notation of the marriage on the baptismal record of the party as already required,[21] the Instruction requires the pastors of the places of baptism to return a written acknowledgment of the entry of this marriage upon the baptismal record of the parties to the pastor who assisted at the marriage.

41. What if this acknowledgment is not returned?
The pastor who assisted at the marriage must not rest content until he has received the acknowledgment.

42. Where is this acknowledgment to be kept?
It is to be filed with the other papers of this marriage.

43. Has any diocese adopted convenient forms for this notification of marriages sent to churches of baptism and for the acknowledgment?
Yes, the diocese of Camden.*

44. What neglected obligation [22] is recalled by the Instruction when baptism shall have been conferred outside the parish of origin?
Whenever the baptism is conferred outside the parish of

[19] Canons 1013, 1830.

[20] Canon 1103.

[21] Canons 470-2.

* When these receipts are returned to the Pastors they are attached to a stub and kept as permanent records.

[22] Canons 778; 90.

origin (e. g., a Catholic maternity hospital) the pastor or rector of the church where the baptism is conferred shall as soon as possible send a record of the baptism to the parish of origin.

45. What obligation does the Instruction place upon the Ordinary?
That of visitation and an annual report.

46. How will this visitation be conducted?
The Ordinary, preferably in person or by delegate, every six months or at least within a year, shall inspect attentively whether the rectors of the parishes are keeping especially their matrimonial and baptismal records as prescribed by law and preserving them properly in the archives.

47. How thorough will this examination be?
Each and every single record of marriage celebrated and baptism conferred is to be examined and checked by placing opposite it a special sign.

48. What penalty for the careless pastor is suggested by the Instruction?
The Ordinary will not fail to inflict canonical penalties on the negligent in accordance with Canon 2222-1, not excluding suspension *a divinis*, especially in the case of relapse.

49. What of the report?
The Ordinary shall annually report to the Congregation of the Sacraments as to the observance of the Instruction in the diocese especially regarding the visitation and examination of records.

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[The conclusion of this article will appear in a forthcoming issue.]

Studies and Conferences

Questions, the discussion of which is for the information of the general reader of the Department of Studies and Conferences, are answered in the order in which they reach us. The Editor cannot engage to reply to inquiries by private letter.

A PROTESTANT VIEW OF MARRIAGE AND VIRGINITY.

Americans, both Catholic and non-Catholic are familiar with the history of Pastor Niemoeller. His struggles and sufferings in defense of the things of God against those of Caesar have won wide-spread and merited praise. Not so well known to the laity, but deserving earnest study from theologians, is the work of the "Crisis" School which is attempting to row upstream against the torrential rush of religious Liberalism and to restore belief in the Divinity of Christ.

The Pastor and the theologians of the Crisis School are linked in history if not in doctrine. The latter have also run afoul of Adolph Hitler. Their founder, Karl Barth, now a professor at Basle, recently of Utrecht, and formerly of Bonn, refused to take an oath of unconditional fealty to the Führer. He foresaw a time when he might have to obey God rather than man. Moreover, the Nazis questioned the orthodoxy of his views on concentration camps and the origin of the Reichstag fire. Switzerland, however, has given him a welcome.

Barth's views are set forth in his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans,* the best work on the subject by an orthodox Protestant. But the great master has a pupil equally famous, Emil Brunner, Professor of Theology at Zurich. Perhaps his most celebrated work is *The Mediator,* a study of the Incarnation, but at the same time a compendium of Brunner's whole theological system.[1] Later works are *Philosophy of Religion, God and Man,* and *The Divine Imperative.*[2]

[1] I have a criticism of this work and of Brunner's theology in *Thought* 12 (1937), pp. 447-458.

[2] All these works are available in English. *The Mediator,* New York, 1934; *The Philosophy of Religion,* New York, 1937; *God and Man,* London, 1936; *The Divine Imperative,* New York, 1937. All references in this paper are to the English editions.

It is well to note at the outset, however, that Brunner, true to strict Calvinism and Lutheranism, places no value on human reason. He denies its ability even to prove the existence of God. This truth can be known only from revelation.[3] Moreover, human reason is not a safe guide in the matter of ethics and morals.[4] Hence for the Zurich doctor, questions of conduct, morality and perfection are to be tested on the touchstone of revelation.[5] It is the purpose of this work to discuss Brunner's views on the subject of virginity and marriage as found in *The Divine Imperative*. The Catholic position on this question will then be stated and demonstrated.

Brunner's Views.

The Swiss professor admits that orthodox Protestants have held too low a view of virginity. "In the past, Protestantism, in its reaction against the monastic ideal, both in theory and in practice has gone too near the other extreme of error, and has from the outset made the unmarried state ethically contemptible; but today the very fact of the surplus number of women,

[3] "But for the very reason that it (i. e., the human intellect) is of divine origin, it is not itself God and therefore cannot conceive God. How much less then, can our clouded reason conceive God" (*The Mediator*, p. 42). "In so far as God is Creator and Lord of the world, the Creator of the world who made it out of nothing, it is impossible to know Him through the world itself." (ibid, p. 269). "Through God alone can God be known. The knowledge of God comes only through revelation" (*ibid*, p. 201). "All things can become objects of our thought and be fitted by us into a system, save one thing only, God himself. He must reveal himself to us" . . . "The God of the philosophers, the God reached through thought, is never the Lord, just for that reason, that he is reached through thought." . . . "The God who is known from the world is precisely not the Creator" (*God and Man*, pp. 58-61). "The God attained by a metaphysic is never the Almighty but only a very powerful being, never the Creator but only a demiurge" (*The Philosophy of Religion*, p. 65).

[4] "Conscience is not the 'Voice of God', as it used to be described in the theology of the Enlightenment, and as it has since been usually regarded by popular natural theology. Nor is it the consciousness of the Moral Law, of the 'Thou Shalt', nor the judgment of the intellect concerning the agreement or non-agreement of an action with the law" (*The Divine Imperative*, p. 156). According to Brunner, it has suffered as a result of Original Sin, which is the total depravity of human nature. "Conscience does not face sin as though it were that part of man which had remained sound, but it is itself deeply involved in sin. Indeed, it is that which most separates man from God, which drives man most of all into his loneliness away from God" (*ibid*, p. 157).

[5] Brunner has not exerted much influence on orthodox American Protestantism. Thus Archer E. Anderson in *Bibliotheca Sacra* 92 (1935) pp. 354-363 condemns *The Mediator* on several counts. 1) Its denial of the ability to prove the existence of God is against Romans 1. 2) It has no clear knowledge of what constitutes Scripture. 3) The author does not hold a real resurrection of the body, nor 4) the Virgin Birth. It is gratifying to record the views of this staunch Calvinist Journal.

the presence of a host of involuntarily unmarried women, ought to warn us on no account to allow the idea of virginity to be exposed to contempt ".[6]

However, it is no part of the theologians of the Crisis School to pay special respect to virginity. The opinion that St. Paul considered this state superior to matrimony is held to be erroneous. " This idea of virginity cannot rightly be ascribed to the Apostle Paul. His higher estimate of the unmarried state is due not to the contrast between the spirit and the flesh, but wholly and entirely to his escatology, and, if I may put it so, to his idea of vocation . . . We now see that the form of Pauline escatology was due to the limitations of his own day, and with it his emphasis on the unmarried state." [7] The early Church comes in for its share of blame. " The argument for virginity which forced its way into the Christian Church at a very early stage must be described most certainly as a serious distortion of the Biblical idea of marriage. Through Platonic Hellenistic mysticism the idea penetrated into the early Church that the sex element, as such, is something low, and unworthy of intelligent man, an idea which though it may be quite justifiable within Platonic Idealism, is an absolute opposition to the Biblical idea of Creation. This idea, actualized in monasticism, erected into a standard in the Catholic ideal of virginity, was not wholly overcome by the Reformation ".[8]

Marriage.

Not only does Brunner maintain that virginity has been too highly esteemed by Catholics, but he avers that matrimony has been placed on too exalted a plane. " It is not a sacrament, for it does not belong to the sphere of the ' Church ', but to that of creation ".[9] " We cannot be too earnest in our opposition

[6] *The Divine Imperative*, p. 364. All future references unless otherwise indicated, will be from this work. The opinion that there is in the world a notable excess of females over males is erroneous. In the United States, for instance, the births in 1938 were: males, 1,172,541; females 1,114,421. As a matter of fact, more males than females were born in this country every year since 1916. In European countries most affected by the last world war, there was a high mortality in the male population, but research has showed that during a war or hard times, the percentage of male births rises.

[7] P. 365.

[8] P. 364.

[9] P. 382.

to this tendency, (to regard marriage as a sacrament) in the interests of the genuinely 'secular' character of marriage".[10] "Therefore although not a sacrament, and Protestant moralists ought finally to cease playing with this idea which belongs to the late Catholic ethic, marriage is a sacred thing."[11] "The Reformers themselves pointed out that the New Testament proof of marriage is based on the Latin rendering of the Pauline word *musterion* (Ephesians 5, 32) by *sacramentum*, that is, upon the misinterpretation of the Greek word, that primarily *sacramentum* simply expresses what we have described above as *sanctum*, and that marriage only came to be regarded as a sacrament, in the dogmatic sense of the word, quite late".[12]

Brunner has a peculiar idea of *sanctum*. One would be prone to conclude that if marriage were a sacred thing, normal sexual intercourse among married persons would be free from sin. Not so, says the Protestant divine! "The seventh Commandment, 'thou shalt not commit adultery', in its simple every day meaning, the command not to do that which we call adultery, applies also to the believer, as an order for his life, as an order of the community. At the same time, however, he knows, since he understands this commandment in a radical way, that he is an adulterer, and that in his honorable civil state of marriage he stands before God as a sinner who can only exist because of the forgiveness of God."[13] "The reality never corresponds to this idea, any more than any real human being corresponds to the idea of man as Image of God. Rather, just as there are only sinful human beings, there is also only sinful marriage, that is, marriage which is at the same time adultery".[14] "We are all 'below the line' for we are all adulterers, some within legitimate marriage and others outside it."[15]

Sexual intercourse is not for the mere purpose of begetting children. "I do not mean, as Christian morality has always been so eager to proclaim, that sexual intercourse is simply for the sake of procreation, and must take place solely for that pur-

[10] P. 651.
[11] P. 349.
[12] P. 648.
[13] P. 150.
[14] P. 350.
[15] P. 353.

pose . . Sexual intercourse is intended by the Creator, not only as a means of procreation but also as a means of expressing the love of married people for one another ".[16] " The Christian ethic must stand for the independent meaning of the erotic and sex element within marriage as an expression of love, not merely as a means of procreation ".[17] But do Christians actually hold that sexual intercourse must take place solely for the purpose of procreating children? Oh yes, says Brunner, that is the view of the Catholic Church. In an explanatory note on the last quotation, he writes, " the acceptance of this proposition alone would mean the final break with the Catholic ideal of marriage." [18] However according to the author whose views we are discussing, Pope Pius XI has changed the Catholic doctrine. " In his Encyclical *Casti Connubii* . . . the Pope tries to meet the need of those married people who are aware that they ought not to have any more children, and who yet do not wish to give up intercourse; the Pope tells them that he permits them to arrange it so that their intercourse shall take place on the days when there is the least likelihood of conception taking place. Obviously this means that the Catholic principle has broken down, sexual intercourse is permitted, even when its aim is not that of procreation, but indeed when the latter is to be avoided." [19]

Divorce.

What about divorce? The author seems to be opposed to it. " The idea of indissolubility is an inherent element in the idea of marriage; it is based on the irrevocable nature of the structure of existence, which is the basis of marriage in general, and is implied in the marriage vows, when they are taken seriously ".[20] This has a ring of finality. But let us read on. "A marriage without love, and this means without sex attraction, should never be contracted . . For the sake of the love of our neighbor the only moral thing to do is to dissolve a marriage of this kind."[21] Is this the only reason for divorce? By no means. There are others, though not clearly defined. " Between the maintenance

[16] P. 367.
[17] P. 368.
[18] P. 653.
[19] P. 654.
[20] P. 359.
[21] P. 361.

of the idea of marriage as an unbreakable relation of fidelity and the command to love one's neighbor as oneself, God's command must here be perceived in a spirit of free decision, and obedience must be achieved. Here above all the judgment of the Christian believer . . . must free itself from the prejudice which is based on the confusion of thought to which we have already alluded, the view that implies that marriage under all circumstances is what God requires, and that divorce is forbidden by Him, so that divorce can only be considered at all as a concession to weakness ".[22] What of the celebrated passage in Matthew V? " It is my definite conviction, which I hold in common with many other scholars, that the phrase " saving for cause of fornication " was not uttered by Jesus Himself, but that this is an interpolation by the Early Church, which had already misunderstood the sayings of Jesus in a legalistic way, and therefore needed such a corrective." [23]

The Catholic Position.

Since Brunner has a reverence for the word of God, it is strange that he should hold that " the argument for virginity which forced its way into the Christian Church at a very early stage must be described most certainly as a serious distortion of the Biblical idea of marriage ".[24] The Catholic Church has never regarded marriage as something base or ignoble, but it has always considered virginity as something superior. In this, it takes its views from Christ Himself. When the Apostles, because of His rigid doctrine on the indissolubility of marriage, exclaimed: " If the case of a man with his wife is so, it is not expedient to marry ", He replied, " Not all can accept this teaching; but those to whom it has been given. For there are eunuchs who were born so from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs who were made so by men; and there are eunuchs who have made themselves so for the kingdom of heaven's sake. Let him accept it who can ". (Matt. 19, 10-13).[25] Now of course the phrase " who have made themselves so for the kingdom of heaven's sake " must no more be interpreted literally than similar

[22] P. 362.

[23] P. 651.

[24] P. 364.

[25] I employ the new Catholic revised translation throughout.

phrases concerning cutting off and throwing away a hand or foot to secure salvation. (Matt. 5, 29-31; 18, 9). Mere physical disability is no guarantee to eternal happiness.[26] The sense of our Lord's statement is that those who abstain from marriage from supernatural reasons embrace a lofty state, one needing divine assistance, (" let him accept it who can ").

Though Protestant Liberals prefer the Synoptics to St. John and St. Paul, the opposite is true of Brunner. He often argues against a Catholic position by appealing to the writings of these two Apostles. Thus for instance on the subject of the Virginal Conception,[27] he writes " This so-called fundamental dogma is not mentioned either by Paul or by John ".[28] Hence passages from these two hagiographers should have special weight with him. Now St. Paul sums up his doctrine on this point in a very few words. " But if any man thinks that he incurs disgrace with regard to his virgin, since she is over age, and if so it ought to be done, let him do what he will; he does not sin if she should marry. But he who stands firm in his heart, being under no constraint, but is free to carry out his own will, and has decided to keep his virgin—he does well. Therefore both he who gives his virgin in marriage does well, and he who does not give her does better " (I Cor. 7, 36-39).[29]

[26] J. Knabenbauer *in h.l.*

[27] Generally called erroneously the Virgin Birth.

[28] *The Mediator* p. 323.

[29] James Moffatt in *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians,* New York, (a recent work, but no date is given), pp. 97-101, maintains that St. Paul is here speaking not of fathers giving away daughters in marriage, but of spiritual marriages between the devout of both sexes, which marriages might become *rata et consummata* if temptation should prove too strong. These spiritual marriages were, he says, the origin of the *virgines subintroductae* of the early Church. He translates vv. 36-39 as follows: "At the same time, if any man considers that he is not behaving properly to the maid who is his spiritual bride, if his passions are strong and if it must be so, then let him do what he wants—let them be married; it is no sin for him. But the man of firm purpose who has made up his mind, who instead of being forced against his will has determined to himself to keep his maid a spiritual bride—that man will be doing the right thing. Thus both are right, alike in marrying and in refraining from marriage, but he who does not marry will be found to have done better ".

Even if one should admit this translation as plausible, the passage still brings out St. Paul's greater esteem for virginity than for the married state. But the evidence that the Apostle refers to spiritual relationships, is far-fetched as Moffatt himself writes. " Such seems to be the situation, though the data are by no means free from uncertainty . . . It is one illustration of how much was going on at this time in the Church of which we know little or nothing during the second half of the first century ", (p. 97). The theory of Moffatt, advanced about thirty years ago by Grafe and Achilis, is brilliantly refuted by E. B. Allo, *Première Epître aux Corinthiens,* Paris, 1934, pp. 189-195.

The Apostle gives his reason for the superiority of virginity. " He who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please God. Whereas he who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife; and he is divided. And the unmarried woman, and the virgin, thinks about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy in body and in spirit. Whereas she who is married thinks about the things of the world, how she may please her husband " (I Cor. 7, 32-35). Of course St. Paul is referring to virginity voluntarily embraced and for supernatural motives.

St. Paul's doctrine on virginity is not based on his eschatology, on some erroneous view that the coming of the Lord was near at hand. That St. Paul expected the end of the world to occur soon, is asserted by many non-Catholic exegetes,[30] but their contention cannot be proved. The Apostle himself writes: " for you yourselves know well that the day of the Lord is to come like a thief in the night ". (I Thess. 5:2). Now we need not stress that a burglar does not furnish in advance a time table to his victims.

The opinion of the rationalists as to St. Paul's erring eschatology is based principally on a false interpretation of a passage in First Thessalonians: " For this we say to you in the word of the Lord, that *we who live, who survive* until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep . . . The dead in Christ will rise up first. Then *we who live, who survive,* shall be caught up together with them in clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall ever be with the Lord ". (1 Thess. 4:15-18). In this citation the words underlined are expressed in the Greek by present participles. Now a present participle in Greek does not necessarily state a fact; it may express a condition. We who live, who survive may mean here, *if we are alive, if we are surviving.* This is true even in the language of Saint Paul. He writes, " For if they did not escape who rejected Him who spoke upon earth, much more shall we not escape *who turn away* (present participle) from Him who speaks in heaven ". (Heb. 12, 25). St. Paul is here not stating that he and his followers

[30] Thus Arthur Darby Nock, *St. Paul,* London, 1938, p. 154; Kirsopp Lake, *Paul,* New York, 1934, p. 121; Guy Kendall, *A Modern Introduction to the New Testament,* London, 1938, p. 147; J. E. Frame, *Thessalonians* in *The International Critical Commentary,* New York, 1912, p. 172; and J. Moffatt in *The Expositor's Greek Testament,* 4, London, p. 37.

are actual apostates; he says their judgment will be severe, *if they apostatize.*

However, the Thessalonians actually did misunderstand or misconstrue the Apostle's letter, so he wrote them a second, and in this he said, " We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together unto Him, not to be hastily shaken from your right mind, nor terrified, whether by spirit, or by utterance, or by letter attributed to us, as *though the day of the Lord were near at hand* ". (2 Thess. 2, 1). St. Paul does not state that the end of the world is far distant. On that subject he knew only one element. It will come " as a thief in the night ".[31]

There are some other passages which seem to hint that the Apostle thought that the coming of the Saviour was near at hand. Thus he writes, " I think, then, that this is good on *account of the present distress*—that it is good for man to remain as he is. Art thou bound to a wife? Do not seek to be freed. Art thou freed from a wife? Do not seek a wife. . . . and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Yet such will have tribulation of the flesh. But I spare you that. But this I say, brethren, *the time is short,* it remains that those who have wives be as if they had none; and those who weep, as though not weeping; and those who rejoice, as though not rejoicing; and those who buy, as though not possessing; and those who use this world, as though not using it, for this world as we see it is *passing away* ". (1 Cor. 7, 26-32). A bit further on in this same epistle, the Saint uses similar language. After citing from the Old Testament examples of various sins and their punishment, he adds, " Now these things happened to them as a type, and they were written for our correction, *upon whom the final age of the world has come* ". (1 Cor. 10, 11).

Before examining these passages, it will be well to consider a few others which show that the Saint either did not expect the end of the world to come soon, or at least visualized the possibility that he might die before the coming of the Lord. Thus in 1 Thess. 5, 10, he speaks of " Our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us in order that, *whether we wake or sleep* (i. e. live or die), we should live together with Him ". These words show that

[31] An excellent study of St. Paul's eschatology is W. J. McGarry, *Paul and the Crucified,* New York, 1939, pp. 62-65.

from the passage in the same letter " we who live, who survive until the coming of the Lord ", (1 Thess. 4, 15), one cannot rightly infer that St. Paul had a firm conviction that he should be alive at the Last Day. To the Corinthians he writes, " For we know that He who raised up Jesus *will raise up us also and with Jesus, and will place us with you* ". (2 Cor. 4, 14). Here the saint excludes himself and some others from the number of those whom the Lord will find alive at His coming.[32] But a more conclusive argument can be drawn from chapters 9, 10, and 11 of the *Epistle to the Romans.* Here we are told that the conversion of the Gentiles will precede that of the Jews. Especially striking is the following: " For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own conceits, that a *partial blindness only* has befallen Israel, until the full number of Gentiles should enter and thus *all Israel shall be saved* ". (Rom. 11, 25, 26).[33] Now it is evident that the Apostle must expect that a rather considerable time should elapse before first all the Gentiles, and secondly all the Jews should be converted.[34]

Realizing, therefore, from the passages just cited, that St. Paul had frequently expressed views at variance with an expectation of the speedy second coming of the Lord, let us consider the verses which seem to portend an end to the world in the immediate future. What is the " present distress referred to in 1 Cor. 7? It is difficult to discover with certainty. Though the word ανάγκη is found at times both in the New Testament and the Apocrypha with relation to the crisis preceding the end of the world, there are verses in St. Paul where it has no such meaning.[35] As for the phrase *the time is short,* there is no reference to the Parousia. To prove this point, all we have to do is to recall what the Saint writes of the conversion of the Gentiles and later of the Jews.

[32] Thus R. Cornely *in h.l.*

[33] Here there is question of entrance into the Messianic kingdom or the Catholic Church. R. Cornely *in h.l.*

[34] Our Lord had foretold " this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a witness to all nations; and then will come the end ". (Matt. 24, 14). R. Cornely, however, commenting on Romans II, 26, says that according to the revelation made to Paul, Our Lord's prophecy cannot be interpreted in the narrow sense of mere preaching of the Gospel among all peoples. *It will be accepted* everywhere.

[35] 2 Cor. 4, 6; 12, 10; 1 Thess, 3, 7.

But does not the Saint tell us that " the final age of the world has come " ? (1 Cor. 10, 11). He does, but by this he means the Messianic Age, predicted by the prophets. As to its duration, he gives us no information.[36] St. Paul, therefore, clearly teaches the excellence of virginity, but he does not base his doctrine on the speedy coming of the Lord.

Now let us examine the doctrine of the Beloved Disciple. He is quite clear in his views on the excellence of virginity. Of one of his visions he writes: " and I saw, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Sion, and with Him a hundred and forty four thousand having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads . . . And they were singing as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song unless those one hundred and forty four thousand, who had been purchased from the earth. These are they who were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These follow the Lamb wherever He goes ". (Apoc. 14, 1-5).[37] There are it is true, some exegetes who think that the passage refers to all the elect.[38] Even if their interpretation is correct, the passage contains a high commendation for virginity, for heavenly sanctity is represented by virginity. This could not be the case, unless in the mind of the writer, virginity is a sublime state.

Marriage.

Matrimony is not merely an institution of nature, it has been raised by Christ to the dignity of a sacrament. The best demonstration of this doctrine is the constant teaching of the Church throughout many centuries. The assertion that the New Testament proof is based on the Latin word *sacramentum* is false. Not a single Catholic authority bases his proof upon this word. In fact, some esteemed Catholic theologians either deny that the passage in Ephesians 5 proves that matrimony is a sacrament or

[36] Catholic authorities on St. Paul and on the Parousia, include Allo and Cornely, also J. B. Colon in *Dict. de Théol.* Cath., II B, 2388-2391; A. Lemonyer in *Dict. Apol. de la Foi Cath.*, 1, 1916, 1919, and F. Prat, *La Théologie de Saint Paul*, 120, Paris, 1930, pp. 87-91. For responses of the Biblical Commission on this subject, cf. Denzinger Bannwart, 2179-2182.

[37] There is no doubt that St. John is the author of this work. Cf. J. Corluy in *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, 1, 1, 742-746.

[38] So affirms L. Fillion, *La Saint Bible Commentée* 8[9], Paris, 1928, p. 847, Fillion, however, does not hold this opinion.

hold that the proof is weak.[39] But more important, Orthodox Greeks and heretical sects as Armenians and Jacobite Copts, also defend the sacramental character of marriage. Now these churches do not use the Latin Vulgate.

The preposterous statement that all marriages are adulterous is based on the Lutheran doctrine that man is essentially sinful. It is no wonder that a religion which teaches this abhorrent notion should have lost its grip.

No Catholic theologian ever held that the *sole* purpose of sexual intercourse was the procreation of offspring. It is the common teaching of the Church that matrimony has three ends: 1) the generation and education of children; 2) mutual love, devotion and service; 3) a remedy against concupiscence, i e., checking sexual pleasure within the limits of morality.[40] Intercourse between married people is not sinful, and may express mutual love. As Brunner might have found out, if he had consulted text books on moral theology written *before* the Encyclical *Casti Connubii*, Pius XI introduced no new doctrine. Catholic moralists had always granted the liceity on the part of husband and wife " to arrange it so that their intercourse shall take place on the days when there is the least likelihood of conception taking place ". They had also sanctioned intercourse between those whose advanced age precluded normal expectancy of children.[41]

Divorce.

Though Brunner pays lip service to the indissolubility of the marriage bond, he allows the contracting parties to sever their union on rather vague grounds. As far as his doctrine is concerned, " incompatibility of temperament ", a euphemism for desire to marry some one else, may be urged as an excuse to throw off the galling shackles. With respect to the clause in

[39] For instance, F. Prat, *La Théologie de Saint Paul* 2[8], Paris, 1933, p. 328; J. M. Vosté, *Commentarius in Epistulam ad Ephesios*, Romae, 1921, p. 229; L. Lercher, *Institutiones Theologiae Dogmaticae*, 4, Oeniponte, 1930, p. 623. Both the Westminster version and the New Catholic Revised version translate *sacramentum* by the word mystery.

[40] The three blessings of matrimony, as seen in the teaching of St. Augustine, are *bonum prolis, fidei et sacramenti. De Bono Conjugali* 3, 24, 32; CSEL 41, 226. This is the common doctrine of the Church.

[41] For this and other weighty reasons, Herbert Doms in his work *The Meaning of Marriage*, New York, 1939, asserts that too much emphasis has been placed on the procreation of children as the *primary* end of marriage. This is a very stimulating book.

Matthew 5, 38 " saving for the sake of fornication ", it is found, with slight verbal differences which do not change the sense in all the Greek MSS versions and Patristic citations.[42] Yet Brunner does not hesitate to assert gratuitously that the words were not uttered by Our Lord. He also assumes without grounds that the early Church misunderstood the sayings of Jesus. Now who is more apt to know the words and spirit of Christ, those who were living close to Him, or a don living in the twentieth century? It is evident from the context in Chapters 5 and 19 that Our Lord is proposing a strict doctrine and is so understood by the Apostles. On hearing His words, they said to Him, " if the case of a man with his wife is so, it is not expedient to marry ". (Matt. 19, 10).

A final point. Does Matthew 5,32 " But I say to you that everyone who puts away his wife, save on account of immorality, causes her to commit adultery; and he who marries a woman who has been put away commits adultery," establish at least one reason for absolute divorce? No, this interpretation is contradicted by other passages of the New Testament. St. Paul writes as follows: " But to those who are married, not I, *but the Lord commands* that a wife is not to depart from her husband, and if she departs, that she is to remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband." (1 Cor. 7, 10-12). Those words are absolute, the marriage bond remains, no matter why the wife departs from her husband. Again we might cite Romans 7, 3: " Therefore *while her husband is alive,* she will be called an adulteress if she be with another man; but if her husband dies, she is set free from the law of the husband, so that she is not an adulteress if she has been with another man." But if adultery could sever the marriage bond, both husband and wife could remarry.[43] Now Brunner because of his principles should place great stress on St. Paul's teaching, but if he should wish to disregard it because he finds it inconvenient, he still must explain away Luke 16, 18 and Mark 10, 2-13. These are decisive. When the disciples ask their Master to clear up His teaching in regard to divorce,

[42] Cf. Nestle, Merk and Tischendorf *in h.l.*

[43] Kirsopp Lake writes: " Divorce Paul did not permit at all. It is to be noted that on this point he diverges both from Roman and from Jewish Law, but follows and possibly quotes Jesus on the basis of his position ". *An Introduction to the New Testament,* New York, 1937, p. 112.

He said, " Whoever (ὅς ἄν) puts away his wife and marries another, commits adultery against her; and if the wife puts away her husband and marries another, she commits adultery ". (Mark 10, 11).[44]

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THE INTRINSIC EVIL OF CONDOMISTIC RELATIONS.

I am very grateful to Monsignor John A. Ryan, writing in the October ECCLESIASTICAL REVIEW, for his kindly comments on my article in the July issue concerning the way in which the confessor should deal with a woman whose husband is practicing contraception. One section of my article, as Monsignor Ryan points out, could be developed more fully—that dealing with the *intrinsic* immorality of condomistic intercourse *from its very inception,* which I affirmed, though at the same time I asserted that the initial stage of this action is not intrinsically wrong in the same sense as certain other sins, such as blasphemy. Monsignor Ryan suggests that this distinction be explained in the light of some general moral principle, and my purpose in this article is to attempt such an explanation.

In the first place, let it be made clear that we are discussing only the *inception* of condomistic intercourse, the physical act of union which takes place before the husband seminates. The actual semination is voluntary pollution, an action which is absolutely wrong, and which, it would seem, not even God, by a special dispensation, could permit to be deliberately performed. (Merkelbach, *Summa Theologiae Moralis,* I, 258). This phase of the sin has the same malice whether it follows condomistic relations or the " natural " mode of withdrawal. But theologians draw a sharp distinction between the two modes, the artificial and the natural, *in their initial stage.* The inception of the natural mode, they say, is intrinsically lawful; the evil element is merely the husband's bad intention. But the initial

[44] The best explanation of Mtt. 5, 32 is by J. P. Haran in *Theological Studies* 2 (1941) pp. 198-221. The author proves that the limiting clause should read " except in the case of adultery ". The Jews distinguished between mere separation of husband and wife, and a bill of divorce which broke the marriage bond. Our Lord establishes the principle that a husband whose wife committed adultery could dismiss his wife *a mensa et toto.* Though this is the ordinary Catholic interpretation, Fr. Haran demonstrates the point in an original and conclusive manner.

phase of condomistic intercourse is intrinsically wrong (e. g., Cappello, *De Sacramentis,* III, 817). From this the theologians deduce—first, that a moderately grave reason will justify a wife in cooperating with a husband who uses the natural mode of onanism (provided she protests against his sin), while a most grave reason is required to justify her in submitting passively to her husband if he uses the artificial method (and some theologians,—e. g., Merkelbach, III, 955—do not allow her to submit, however extreme the case, except when confronted by predominant physical force). Secondly, when natural onanism is practiced, the wife may deliberately consent to the pleasure up to the moment of withdrawal; when she submits to the artificial practice (in the rare cases in which she may submit) she may not, under penalty of grave sin, consent willingly to any venereal pleasure, not even the imperfect kind, unaccompanied by full gratification.

This clear-cut distinction between the two modes and the practical conclusions drawn from it find support, at least implicitly, in various ecclesiastical decisions (cf. Cappello, *De Sacramentis,* III, 818—Iorio, *Theologia Moralis,* 1346-1350). Evidently there is something immoral in the condomistic act *from the very beginning*, which is not found in the inception of natural onanism. It cannot be merely the bad intention of the husband, for that is common to both types. Whichever mode he employs, he is directing his action to an absolutely immoral end. Yet, in one case the wife may cooperate for a moderately grave reason and derive voluntary pleasure from her cooperation; in the other case she is permitted, at most, passive submission for most serious reasons, and even in that event, she may not deliberately consent to any pleasure. Such consent, even to an imperfect degree, would be a grave sin. In a word, there is intrinsic evil in condomistic intercourse, even from its initial stage.

But here we encounter a difficulty. Mutual touches of husband and wife, when there is no danger of pollution, may be performed lawfully with imperfect pleasure if there is a sufficiently justifying reason (e. g., increase of affection), and even when there is no such reason, they are not gravely sinful. Accordingly, the same physical act that constitutes the inception of condomistic intercourse (that is physical union with the man wearing a condom) could be lawfully employed by a husband

and wife, when they intend to confine themselves to that manner of touch and when there is no danger that either will seminate. How then can it be called *intrinsically* wrong when performed as the first stage of the husband's pollution (that is, when it is performed as the beginning condomistic intercourse)? As was said above, the reason in the latter case is not found adequately in the husband's bad intention, for that is present in the natural mode, yet it does not render the beginning of the act intrinsically wrong. So, we have an action called intrinsically wrong, yet in certain circumstances that same act is permissible. How explain this apparent contradiction?

The following seems to be a reasonable solution. In determining the prescriptions of the natural law on marriage, good and evil are estimated on the basis of what *ordinarily* or *normally* happens. For example, St. Thomas applies this principle to divorce, showing that it is forbidden by the natural law because it is normally detrimental to the primary purpose of marriage, even though in a particular case this evil might not follow. (Suppl., Q. 67, a. 1, ad. 4). This same principle can be applied to condomistic intercourse even in its initial stage. Since it normally tends to an effect harmful to the primary purpose of marriage, it is correctly said to be forbidden by the natural law, to be intrinsically wrong. The same is not true of the inception of natural onanism. That act by its nature tends toward proper insemination, and hence it is intrinsically lawful, even in the case when the husband intends to withdraw before the act is properly completed.

But how can the physical act which is intrinsically wrong as the inception of condomistic relations be permissible in the case of a husband and wife who are able and willing to have it go no further than a mere *tactus*? The solution, I believe, can be found in these principles laid down by Merkelbach (*Summa Theologiae Moralis,* I, 258):

"The matter or the circumstances of certain precepts [of the natural law] can be changed, and when they are changed, the law no longer binds. There are some precepts which are based on the very immutable essences of things, immediately and independently of every condition, and in these there is no change; others are based on the natural and ordinary conditions of things, and regard those things which are ordinarily and regularly good

or bad, but not under every condition and for every case. For God, by a miracle, can change the conditions of things that are the matter of the law, and second causes can change the circumstances of things; and when these are changed, though the principles of the law and the law itself are not changed, they are no longer applicable. Hence it can happen that the same action, *physically* considered, which was commanded or forbidden by the law of nature, is now not commanded or forbidden, because it is *morally* different, either because of a change of matter by a miracle of God or on account of the change of circumstances ".

An example of the first class of precepts, admitting no change and consequently no exception, would be the prohibition to blaspheme. An example of the second class would be the act which is employed as the incipient stage of condomistic intercourse. Normally, by its physical nature, it tends to something absolutely evil; therefore it is rightly said to be intrinsically wrong by the natural law. But second causes could change the circumstances—that is, in rare instances husband and wife could, by mutual agreement and self-restraint, safely perform it as a mere touch; then it comes under that species of actions which Merkelbach says may in different circumstances be morally different, though physically the same.

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WHO ARE THE CONVERTS? *

During 1941, according to figures in the Official Catholic Directory, 82,087 men and women made the great decision to enter the Catholic Faith. The late G. K. Chesterton, who should know, said: " Catholicism is not spread by any particular professional tricks or tones or secret signs or ceremonies. Catholicism is spread by Catholics; but not certainly, in private life at least, merely by Catholic priests." If converts are not made solely through the ministrations of priests, what factors are there at work? Where do these people come from? At what age do they enter the Church and what are some of the

* The material for this article is based on a dissertation *Leakage from a Catholic Parish* presented to the faculty of the School of Social Work, Catholic University of America.

circumstances surrounding their conversion? An answer to these and other questions is provided by an intensive study of a small group of converts in a single parish, which we shall call by the fictitious name of St. Patrick's parish.

St. Patrick's is an old and large parish in a metropolitan area on the Atlantic seaboard. When the parish visitation which is the basis of this study was made, there were 151 converts in the parish—sixty-three men and eighty-eight women. Seventy-nine percent of the converts were practicing the Faith, six percent were lax, and fifteen percent were lapsed Catholics. On the score of religious status, the converts were not much better nor much worse than the rest of the parishioners.

At what age did these people come into the Church? The largest number of converts was concentrated between the ages of fifteen and thirty. When each sex was considered separately, it was found that men converted at a later age than women. Seventy-six percent of the women converted before the age of thirty as compared with fifty-six percent of the men converted before that age. For the group as a whole, the mean age at conversion was 28.5 years. The mean age at conversion of women was 25.6 years and of men 32.5 years.

Contemplated marriage with a Catholic and mixed marriage seemed to be the two greatest sources of conversion in St. Patrick's parish. Fifty-seven percent of the converts contracted mixed marriage, thirty-one percent Catholic marriage, and eleven percent invalid marriage which was later validated. One percent were invalidly married at the time the study was made. Only nine of the converts were single persons.

Significant was the fact that 63 percent of the married converts converted after marriage and 13 percent converted on the wedding day or less than one year before marriage. The remaining 24 percent converted on an average of three to five years before marriage and their conversion, in most instances, did not seem to be related to their subsequent matrimonial venture.

Considered from the viewpoint of time of conversion, the present religious status of these converts also seemed significant. The proportion of practicing Catholics was highest in the group converted three to five years before marriage, next highest in the group converted some years after marriage, and lowest in the

group converted on the wedding day or within one year before it.

How long after marriage did conversions take place? For the men, the average number of years intervening between marriage and conversion was 13.3 and for the women 8.8 years. Of course, there were extremes. One woman converted at the age of 69 after 41 years of married life; one man converted at the age of 67 after 47 years of marriage.

A study of the previous religion of the converts showed that about one-third were formerly Methodists, one-fifth formerly Lutherans, about one-fifth lapsed Catholics, and the balance from the Episcopal, Baptist, Methodist-Episcopal, Jewish, Presbyterian, Quaker, High Episcopal, Unitarian and United Brethren in Christ faiths. Fifteen reported no religion before they adopted Catholicism. In general, it seemed that the converts came from the denominations which were strongest in the area, measured by numbers.

A theory sometimes heard in discussions among priests, namely, that " a good percentage of converts should have really been Catholics all their lives " finds some justification in the fact that in the cases of twenty-eight converts, about 20 percent, previous religion was listed as " lapsed Catholic." As used here the term means a person who was or should have been baptized in infancy in the Catholic rite but was not brought up in the Faith. Although some of these persons had been exposed to the influences of other sects none of them seems to have taken a great interest in their teachings. Later in life, the meeting with their Catholic future mate was the first step in their coming into the Church—or the second step, if one considers their infant baptism the first. For completeness, it must be added that not all in this classification were influenced by marriage; a small number were baptized at the validation of the marriage of their parents.

A study of the education of the mixed marriage mates of converts showed that 63 percent of the Catholic wives and 57 percent of the Catholic husbands attended Catholic schools. In the main, the chances seemed somewhat better that the non-Catholic mate would be converted if the Catholic party had received Catholic education.

After this general survey of facts about the converts, a study of factors in conversion as given by the converts themselves or by their mates was made. Before discussing these, however, it might be well to mention several limitations. The process of conversion is a very complex and subtle thing, which is probably not fully understood or comprehended by the convert himself in all cases. Apart from this purely psychological aspect there is also the indubitable truth that the Gift of Faith is truly a Gift of God; that each conversion operates in the soul through Grace. A consideration of these truths leads to the belief that what are here presented as " reasons " or " factors " are really no more than conditions or circumstances surrounding conversion which have contributed something to leading or drawing the soul to the Truth. Fundamentally, there can be but one Cause of conversion and that is God Himself. It is also true, however, that God uses human instruments in the perfecting of His works. By force of circumstances, our discussion is naturally confined to these latter—largely external and objective—persons or situations which seem to have contributed toward some conversions.

This is, of course, a highly individualistic view of conversion. To preserve proper perspective, one must not lose sight of the broad fact that the Catholic Church has been commissioned by her Divine Founder to bring the light of Truth to all nations. In carrying out this order, the Church has sent missionaries into the far corners of the world. Obviously, this is also the work of conversion. Just as St. Patrick's is one unit of Church organization that is ready to aid anyone sincerely interested in the Catholic Faith, so there are thousands of other such units. Every place where the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass betokens the presence of a Catholic priest, be it in magnificently adorned metropolitan cathedral or in humble mission chapel of mud and sticks, there the work of winning converts to the Faith goes on. From each and every centre the Church slowly but steadily advances toward her ideal—to win the world for Christ.

Getting back to the converts of St. Patrick's parish, we have classified their reasons for entering the Church into three groups: influence of persons, emotional or intellectual appeal, and critical situations in life. There will be some overlapping of cases in the following discussion, since many converts gave more than one reason for converting.

Judging from the number of times it was mentioned, the influence of persons seemed to have been more powerful than either the intellectual or emotional appeal or the critical situations in life.

The person who exerted influence on the convert in the largest number of cases—38 men and 41 women—seemed to have been the present or future wife or husband. This is perhaps the expected thing, not only because of the close relationship set up by matrimony but also because of the promise on the part of the Catholic party in mixed marriage to do all in his or her power to convert the other. It must not be understood, however, that this influence was always represented as a direct influence; rather, the contrary was the case. That is, protestations on the part of the Catholic party that no direct influence was exerted were frequently heard and, correlatively, converts almost invariably insisted that they came into the Church of their own free will.

Other persons who exerted influence in conversions, in the order of their importance, judging by number of times mentioned were: children; other Catholic associates, including friends, business associates, and relatives other than husband, wife or children; and priests or nuns. In all, 139 converts were influenced by persons.

While the number of men and women was about equal in the classification " influence of persons," it was found that women outnumbered men almost two to one in the group influenced by the " emotional or intellectual appeal." In all, 106 converts—37 men and 69 women—gave this latter as the reason for converting. Classified in this group were converts who gave answers such as the following: " personal conviction "; " liked the religion "; " attended church services "; " made the mission "; and, " tried several religions, and liked the Catholic the best."

The influence of the intellectual appeal, as well as other factors, is illustrated by this statement of a woman, converted in her late 'teens: " I came over because I was impressed that it was the right religion—it was largely my own thinking it out. When I came to the priest for instructions he asked me if there was a man in the case. I told him there wasn't and there wasn't. In fact, it was some years before I met my future husband—a

non-Catholic." In this case the non-Catholic husband, after twenty-five years of married life, is still non-Catholic. But he raised no objections to her rearing the children Catholic; she and the children were classified as practicing Catholics and he was noted as a convert possibility in the parish files.

The emotional appeal, frequently described as " liked the religion " is illustrated by the following two cases. A woman who converted shortly before marriage explained: " I came over because I liked the religion. There were lapsed Catholics all through my family. My great-grandfather came directly from Ireland, but somehow he lost the Faith. But I always leaned to the Catholic religion." The wife of a man who converted a year before marriage stated: " He just liked the religion. He went with my brother and he used to attend services with him quite regular. He was crazy about Father Kelly."

Under " critical situations in life " were classified not only those in which an emergent crisis was present but also situations which might more aptly be described as preventives of crises rather than crises properly so-called. Fifty-four of the converts came within this classification, and again women outnumbered men in the ratio of about two to one. Detailing the statistics will at the same time describe the situations referred to. Seventeen converted in order to preserve peace in the family; nine converted at the time their marriage was validated; eight converted while ill; seven came over because of sickness or death in the family; six were baptized at the time the marriage of their parents was validated; three converted at the birth of a child and the same number at the request of a dying relative; finally, one woman converted at the time financial assistance was given by the parish.

Judged by present religious status, it might be said that those who converted because of the intellectual or emotional appeal showed least inclination to become weak in the Faith, because about 90 percent of them were found to be practicing Catholics. In the group converted because of the influence of persons, 75 to 80 percent were adhering to the practice of their religion. In the group converted at a critical situation in life, as defined for the study, only 60 percent were found to be practicing Catholics.

After this study of factors in conversion was completed, an effort was made to analyze the reasons why ten men and twenty-two women converts were lax or lapsed, on the theory that, if conversion serves as a counterpart to leakage it is important not only to acquire converts but also to retain them.

First of all, in regard to women who converted shortly before or shortly after marriage, it was noticed that the care of children was sometimes given as a reason preventing their regular attendance at church services and participation in church affairs. Then, it seemed, some of these converts were poorly instructed. They did not realize the seriousness of the obligations they had undertaken, and the situation was not improved by the attitude found in a number of instances and expressed as follows by one: " You can never be a good Catholic unless you're born and raised one. I try to understand it as best I can, but there are so many things I can't grasp. I feel I'll never learn enough about the Catholic religion." If continued effort to understand the religion better and better were assured, the situation would not be so bad; but the general attitude of these cases seemed to be that it was just impossible.

There was another attitude which seemed to play a part and which was, perhaps, related to the foregoing. It can be described as an attitude of suspicion, coldness, or even hostility on the part of " born " Catholics toward converts. The lot of most converts was difficult enough because of such matters as the loss of social prestige, the severance of kinship or acquaintanceship ties, and the need to change life-long habits of thought and action, without adding to these expected and prepared-for difficulties a clannish spirit on the part of Catholics who seemed to resent the " intrusion " of the convert. If this attitude is found beyond the bounds of St. Patrick's parish, a possible explanation of it may be that it is a defense mechanism that has developed within the body Catholic because of many centuries of persecution and misunderstanding. From the convert's point of view, however, such a spirit was a double-barbed shaft because it was not only unjustified but also directly counter to what he had been led to expect. On entering the Church, his expectation and sincere belief was that the Catholic Church is the true Church and that Christ founded it for all men—not just for " born " Catholics. This expectation was perfectly justified; this belief coincided perfectly with actuality. But, in

their actions some native Catholics failed to substantiate that belief; worse, they dashed the convert's belief to the ground. In such cases, one may say that a measure of the responsibility for the loss of a convert rests with poorly-instructed " born " Catholics as much as with poorly-instructed converts. The obvious remedy is to instruct these " born " Catholics and make them aware of the true mission of the Church and of their serious obligation to welcome all into her Fold as members of the Mystical Body of Christ.

Another factor that seemed to be operative in a number of cases was the poor example furnished by the " born " Catholic mate. Unless a convert was well instructed and strongly grounded in Faith, he found great difficulty in living up to his belief in the face of the negligence of his marriage partner. It would certainly be a fervent convert who would be zealous in attendance at Mass, reception of the sacraments, Catholic education of his children, and other Catholic practices if his spouse were indifferent in these matters.

Then, as already indicated, the reason for conversion seemed to play some part in the religious status of the convert. Those who gave as reason for converting one that falls within the scope of " critical situation in life " seemed least likely to live up to the Faith after the crisis was past. This is what one would normally expect; the compulsion of the crisis is such that freedom of choice is not what it would be if the person were in perfect health, if harmony reigned in the family, if such and such a relative had not recently died, if mother-in-law had not " got after " the couple to have the marriage validated, and so on through the other factors listed under " critical situations in life." On the other hand, previous discussion has suggested that those whose conversion was due to the " intellectual or emotional appeal " seemed most likely to be faithful to their new-found treasure.

Certainly, this is no complete discussion of conversion. But it is hoped that the study, while it does not include the " spectacular " type of convert, will nevertheless throw some light on the case of the ordinary, man-in-the-street type of convert who probably constitutes the majority of those 82,087 who entered the Church in the United States last year.

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THE PAULINE CONCEPT OF THE MYSTICAL BODY.

In October, 1940, these pages carried an article of mine concerning the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ.[1] In the issue of December, 1941, there appeared an article by the Rev. William R. O'Connor, much of which was in review of what I had written.[2] From a comparison of the two articles it would seem that certain points upon which both touched still call for clarification. May I write a few words which may contribute to that end?

I.

The most fundamental point in the whole doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ is the relation of " the Mystical Body " to the Pauline " Body of Christ ". The adjective " mystical " is an historical accretion to the Pauline expression. *It was never intended, in this connection, to signify a difference of objective meaning.* Its introduction into common use was not the birth of a new doctrine nor a change in the old. What difference it brought was not more than verbal. Catholic theology simply came to call " the Mystical Body " what it had hitherto called, in the simpler words of the Apostle, " the Body of Christ ".

This identification of " the Mystical Body " with the Pauline " Body of Christ " is the constant understanding of our Catholic tradition. To look upon " the Mystical Body " as one thing and " the Body of Christ " as another would be a new departure in theological thought. For more than a thousand years, as Father O'Connor has indicated,[3] there did not exist in theological literature even the verbal difference which came with the medieval addition of the adjective " mystical ". Sacred Scripture makes no mention of any Body in which men are made the members of Christ, other than the Pauline " Body of Christ ". The Fathers of the Church knew of no other such Body. When they spoke of our membership in Christ they were solely concerned with interpreting and applying the doctrine of the Apostle's " Body of Christ ". After the accession of the

[1] Mystical Body of Christ and Catholic Church, Exactly Coextensive ", *The Ecclesiastical Review*, CIII (1940), pp. 305-328.

[2] " Viewpoints in Theology: A Note on the Mystical Body ", *ibid.*, CV (1941), pp. 452-474.

[3] Pp. 458-460.

adjective " mystical ", the great Scholastics continued to go, as the Fathers had done, to the words of St. Paul about the Body of Christ for their explanations of the Mystical Body. The Holy See continues to do the same today. In short, " the Mystical Body " and " the Body of Christ " are simply variant expressions which are used to designate one and the same doctrine.

It is important to stress this fundamental fact, in the light of what Father O'Connor writes on p. 456 of his article:

> . . . we do not find that St. Paul calls the Church the Mystical Body, or the Mystical Body the Church. St. Paul never made use of the expression " The Mystical Body "; and to assume that he did, is to assume the whole point at issue. For St. Paul the Church is the Body of Christ, not the Mystical Body. One may say that the Body of Christ and the Mystical Body are the same thing. They are—provided that we use the term " Mystical Body " in the same sense in which St. Paul used the term " Body of Christ ".

This is to lose sight of the fact that " the Mystical Body " and " the Body of Christ " are interchangeable terms. The one is simply a later and variant form for the other. When we use the term " Mystical Body " in the same sense in which St. Paul used the term " Body of Christ ", then we have the genuine Pauline concept of the Mystical Body. When we employ it in a different sense, then we have a concept of the Mystical Body which deviates from the Pauline one.[4]

II.

Today, in the literature of this doctrine, the Mystical Body is an analogous term, not a univocal one. It has different meanings, all of which, however, have something in common. Nor is this a late development in the doctrine of the Mystical Body. Centuries before the introduction of the adjective " mystical ", even as far back as the days of the Fathers, the Pauline expression " the Body of Christ " had already become such an

[4] Father O'Connor acknowledges this on another page,—" For St. Paul the Church, the assembly of the baptized, is the Body of Christ. Later this will become the Mystical Body, but we must be careful not to carry into St. Paul a meaning and a precision that were foreign to his mind " (p. 458). Again, on p. 459, he quotes Bishop Myers (*The Mystical Body of Christ*) to the same effect,—" the term ' mystical body '... is used by commentators on the scriptures and by theologians to designate the Body of Christ, put before us so vividly by St. Paul... "

analogous term, replete even then with the many meanings which today are given to the Mystical Body.[5]

But this was not so from the beginning. For St. Paul himself, the metaphor of the Body of Christ was not an analogous term. It was the expression of one definite concept, complex but distinct. It might have been classified as " analogous " in the sense that it was a metaphor, but not in the sense in which analogous is opposed to univocal. For the Apostle, unlike ourselves, the metaphor of the Body of Christ was a *univocal* expression. It meant for him only one thing,—the visible Church of Christ, formed and united and vivified by the indwelling Holy Spirit, pulsing with a divine grace-life which flowed into it from Christ its Head, ever incorporating new members into itself through the instrumentality of Baptism, given by God to the world as the medium of universal salvation. This was the whole " Christ ", the " fullness of Christ ", the corporate and visible realization, even here on earth, of the fruits of our Savior's Passion. Its essential elements were both visible and invisible; and both were equally essential to it.[6]

By the fourth century, however, we find the expression " Body of Christ " used in a variety of other meanings as well. Learned and saintly men saw in the revealed metaphor an excellent medium for illustrating other things in revelation besides the nature of Christ's true Church. Emphasizing one or other element of the complex Pauline metaphor, to the neglect or even to the exclusion of its other equally essential elements, they used it to illustrate the various relations of men to one another and to Him who died that all might be saved. In doing this they continued to employ the Pauline phraseology. And so the words of St. Paul came to be used with meanings which St. Paul himself never attached to them. " The Body of Christ " became the analogous term which it plainly is in the Fathers.

But is it not important, in the light of this historical development, that we should keep the original and revealed meaning

[5] May I disclaim here the statement which Father O'Connor (p. 454) attributes to me, that only one meaning is given to the Mystical Body by the Fathers. On the pages of my article to which he refers there is no such statement. I maintained, in fact, the exact opposite and in several places (pp. 322, 325-326) gave examples of the diversity of the Patristic concepts.

[6] Pope Leo XIII, explaining the meaning of the Apostle's concept, makes the necessity of both these elements to the Mystical Body parallel to the necessity of both Humanity and Divinity in a true concept of Christ, its " Head and exemplar ". *Satis Cognitum, Acta Sanct. Sed.*, XXVIII (1896), 709-710.

of the Body of Christ distinct from the other meanings which have been since attached to the expression? The Body of Christ, the Mystical Body, being an analogous term, is now applied to various *analogata.* But among these the original Pauline concept is the *analogatum primarium.* This is the first meaning of the term, and it was by analogy to this that the other *analogata* came into being. Devotion to God's revealed truth would seem to demand that we always preserve the revealed concept of the Body of Christ distinct from the other analogous concepts which have gathered around it, and give to it the status of preeminent dignity among them all.

Can we speak of this revealed concept of the Body of Christ as not merely *a* " proper " concept but even as the " proper " concept of that Body? It would seem that we can. " Proper " means " own "; and since the doctrine of the Body of Christ, or Mystical Body, has its origins in St. Paul we may justly call the Apostle's own concept of that Body the proper concept of the Mystical Body. " Proper " means " understood in the most correct sense "; and while an analogous term is correctly predicated of any of its analogata, it is *most* correctly predicated of its analogatum primarium. " Proper " means " strictly so called "; and surely the Body of Christ as St. Paul understood it, rather than the wider meanings which were subsequently attached to the term, is the Body of Christ strictly so called. In contradistinction to the proper sense, thus understood, the later and wider meanings of the expression may be aptly described as extended senses of the Body of Christ. Other concepts in theology have experienced a similar development and have, as a matter of fact, been so classified. Take for example the term *Ecclesia.* In the New Testament this means the visible society of the baptized which our Savior founded and entrusted to the government of the Apostles.[7] This is the proper sense of *Ecclesia.* But *Ecclesia* is also used in a wider meaning, as embracing also the Saints in heaven.[8] This is described as an extended sense of the term.[9]

[7] Zorell, *N. T. Lexicon Graecum*; Vigoroux, *Dictionnaire de la Bible.*

[8] *Catechismus Romanus*, I, c. 10, q. 5.

[9] Dieckmann, *De Ecclesia*, II, p. 256,—" Ecclesia deinde distinguitur sensu proprio et stricto et sensu quodam latiore sumpta. Sensu latiore intellegitur nomen Ecclesiae prout et militantem et patientem et triumphantem comprehendit ".

When we thus identify " the proper concept " of the Mystical Body as the exact original concept of St. Paul himself, it is plain that there can be only one such proper concept. Of course we must remember that we are not using the word " proper " in its more conversational meaning, such as might imply a stigma of illegitimacy upon the other concepts. And it is clear that Father O'Connor is employing the word differently when he writes, on p. 472:

> (It is) impossible for us to say that there is one and only one proper sense of the term (Mystical Body). There are as many proper senses as there are legitimate points of view.

III.

Father O'Connor describes three different concepts of the Mystical Body. Each of these arises from a different " viewpoint " from which that Body may be considered. If the Mystical Body is viewed only from the standpoint of an external organization, the "organizational concept" of the Mystical Body which results will regard membership in the Body as synonymous with membership in the Roman Catholic Church.[10] The " spiritual concept ", which considers the Mystical Body only from the standpoint of the divine grace-life which is its glorious vitality, will represent all who are in the state of grace as Christ's members, whether they are Catholics or not.[11] Finally, there is the " redemptive " viewpoint which considers the Mystical Body only inasmuch as it is the divinely-appointed medium of man's redemption. Since Christ is the redeemer of all, this concept represents the entire human race, only the damned excepted, as His members in the Mystical Body.[12]

Of these three concepts this must be said: they are sublime ideas and they are all legitimate concepts of the Mystical Body, being sanctified by the Church's usage through many centuries. But none of these three is that " proper " sense of the Body of Christ which was explained above. St. Paul himself never meant by " the Body of Christ " merely a visible society, nor merely an invisible communion of those in grace, nor merely a salvific

[10] Fr. O'Connor, *op. cit.*, pp. 467-468, 473.

[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 467, 473.

[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 463-466, 473.

relationship, with no further determinant characteristics, between our Redeemer and the whole human race. St. Paul's own concept of the Body of Christ includes the positive elements of all three of these concepts. For him it was a visible organization in which, through grace, redemption is realized by men. Each of the three elements—organizational, spiritual, and redemptive—is equally essential to the Pauline concept, and therefore to the proper concept of the Mystical Body. A viewpoint which, by prescinding from one or other of these elements, represents the original Pauline concept only partially may, it is true, remain "close to the mind of St. Paul"; [13] but it no longer represents his mind exactly.

IV.

Two interesting problems are singled out by Father O'Connor's article. The first concerns the relation of the blessed dead to the Mystical Body.

Does the Body of Christ, in St. Paul's own concept of it, embrace not only the living but also the souls in purgatory and the blessed in heaven? When St. Paul describes the Church as the Body of Christ, does he mean "the Church" to include not only the living but also the dead? It cannot be gainsaid that Father Prat, S.J., judged this to be the mind of St. Paul.[14] And his judgment, in the interpretation of St. Paul, commands a high respect. Nevertheless attention must be called, in this given instance, to the words of the Apostle himself and to those of the Holy See which all combine to form a powerful argument for the opposite opinion.

To St. Paul "the Church" meant the visible organized society of the baptized.[15] It was this visible organized Church which he represented as exactly coextensive with the Body of Christ.[16] His very reasons for calling the Church the *Body* of

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 470.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 457.

[15] Cf., again, Zorell, Vigoroux, *opera cit.* The argumentation which is indicated in the above paragraph is considered in detail in my former article, pp. 311-317.

[16] One demonstration of this exact coextension according to St. Paul's own mind lies in the fact that St. Paul's "simply converts" the Church and the Body of Christ; by the rules of Logic this proves the two groups to be perfectly coextensive. Fr. O'Connor rejects this argument on two grounds (p. 456). First, because St. Paul does not use the adjective "mystical"; this objection has been already answered. Secondly, because there are other concepts of the Mystical Body: this is answered

Christ were, in every instance where he assigned such reasons, visible elements of the visible organized Church.[17] The Holy See has explicitly declared that the visibility of the Church was St. Paul's reason for describing it as the *Body* of Christ.[18] On more than one occasion the Holy See has singled out the non-inclusion of certain men in this visible organization as the decisive reason why such men cannot be said to be included in the Mystical Body of Christ and has represented this as a conclusion from the teaching of St. Paul himself.[19] It would seem clear, therefore, that membership in the Body of Christ is impossible apart from membership in the visible Church with which that Body is coextensive.

It is difficult to see how the blessed dead can be said to be any longer included in the visible Church. It is difficult, therefore, to see how they can be said to be included in the Body of Christ which is that visible Church. One might offer the relation of our Savior's human Soul to His physical Body during the interval between Calvary and the Resurrection as an apt illustration of the relation of these blessed souls to the Mystical Body. They were united to it in life. They will be reunited to it in the day of its glorification. They remain uninterruptedly united to the Person of Christ and to the Godhead which continues to pervade the Body from which they are temporarily separated. Their present state is one of transition, waiting for the day when the Mystical Body will become the Glorified Body of Christ in the final consummation of the whole economy of our redemption.

Father O'Connor considers the description of the Mystical Body in such a way as not to include the blessed dead a unique view. He writes on p. 465: "So far we have not met a single author making use of this term (Mystical Body) in such a way as to exclude the souls in purgatory or the saints in heaven."

by saying that, whatever other concepts there be, the present argument establishes the exact coextension of Church and Body of Christ in the concept which was St. Paul's own.—It is interesting to note that Dieckmann, *loc. cit.*, uses the same rule of "simple conversion" to indicate the absence of exact coextension between *Ecclesia* and *Communio Sanctorum*.

[17] E. g., Rom. 12: 3-8; I Cor. 12: 1-31.

[18] Leo XIII, *Satis Cognitum, loc. cit.*

[19] Pius XI, *Mortalium Animos, Acta Apost. Sed.*, XX (1928), pp. 14-15. Cf. also Leo XIII, *op. cit.*, p. 713.

It is useful, therefore, to give an example of such an author. In Father Gruden's excellent work, *The Mystical Christ*,[20] we read on pp. 321-322: " The mystical body of Christ properly so-called . . . is the visible hierarchical church . . . The members are all *viatores.*" After which the author describes another and broader concept of the Mystical Body, embracing " besides those within the mystic body proper " the blessed in heaven and the souls in purgatory, as well as all the just on earth.

V.

The second of the two questions alluded to above, which are raised in Father O'Connor's article, concerns the meaning of The Mystery which St. Paul made the burden of his preaching.

Do we have in the Apostle's words to the Christians in Colossae, " the glory of this mystery . . . which is Christ within you ",[21] a definition which identifies The Mystery as the union of the faithful in Christ? Or is The Mystery instead, as Father O'Connor believes, God's plan for the redemption of all men rather than the realization of that plan in the visible Church which Christ instituted and which St. Paul called His Body?

Father O'Connor considers this question extensively in his article, since he sees the Mystery of St. Paul behind the adjective " mystical ".[22] Perhaps all theologians will agree on the justice of such insight. That " mystical " in the expression " The Mystical Body " connotes the great Pauline Mystery seems to me to be undeniable. Yet this is not a valid reason for maintaining that visible organization is not an essential element of the Mystical Body according to the Apostle's mind. Whichever of the two interpretations we give to the Mystery, it is incorrect to say that " it is not an organizational term at all ".[23] Even in the second of the two given interpretations, the term essentially connotes the visible organization of the Church which our Savior established. Father O'Connor himself recognizes this in his description: " The Mystery is a term that does not refer so much to the organization of the redeemed into a visible society (St. Paul has a term for that—the *Body* of Christ) as it does to the plan, intention or design, long hidden in the mind of God, that all men should enter this visible society and be

[20] Herder, St. Louis, 1936.
[21] Col. 1: 26-27.
[22] Fr. O'Connor, *op. cit.*, p. 463.
[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 462, 463.

saved ".[24] Whether the Mystery directly refers to the Church or to God's plan that all should enter the Church, it is in either case a term which implies visible organization.

And in any case we need not go further in this problem since, as was seen at the beginning of these remarks, our one concern in seeking the proper concept of the Mystical Body is to establish what St. Paul himself meant by the Body of Christ. " It is important not to confuse the doctrine of the Mystery with the doctrine of the Body of Christ in St. Paul ".[25]

VI.

Before bringing these remarks to a close, it might be helpful to refer to another question which, while it is not raised by Father O'Connor, has been proposed in the letters of some who were kind enough to communicate with me in connection with my former article.

Does not the exact identification of the Mystical Body, properly so called, as the visible Church represent in some way a narrowing of the sole path over which mankind must make its way to salvation? If only Catholics are members of the Mystical Body proper, then how can non-Catholics be saved? Surely membership in the Mystical Body is necessary for salvation!

A moment's consideration will clarify the answer to the problem. When we say that membership in the Body of Christ is the only road to salvation we are walking securely in the footsteps of the Fathers. But to limit that membership as something which, strictly speaking, belongs only to Catholics is not to narrow that only road. For the Fathers have also told us, and the Council of Florence has solemnly defined,[26] that membership in the visible Church of Christ is likewise necessary for salvation. Boniface VIII has defined it even more plainly: " Porro subesse Romano Pontifici omni humanae creaturae declaramus, dicimus, definimus et pronuntiamus omnino de necessitate salutis ".[27] In describing the Mystical Body as we do, therefore, we are but identifying that Body with what we already know to be the one road to heaven. The Council of

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 463.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 472.
[26] Denzinger, *Ench. Symb.*, n. 714.
[27] *Ibid.*, n. 469.

Florence, in the document referred to above, makes the same identification: " Sacrosancta Romana Ecclesia . . . quoscumque ergo adversa et contraria sentientes damnat, reprobat et anathematizat et a Christi corpore, quod est Ecclesia, alienos esse denuntiat ".[28]

If on the one hand we represent membership in the Mystical Body as belonging to every member of the human race on earth, then it would be otiose to speak of it as the only way to salvation. It would be a road which no man could miss walking in, even if he wished to. If, on the other hand, we identify the Mystical Body with the visible Church, in accordance with its original meaning in revelation, then its necessity for salvation becomes very meaningful. Either in actuality or, if the actuality is impossible,[29] in desire, one must be a member of it and subject to the Roman Pontiff who is its visible Head,—or salvation is impossible. We should remember, however, that membership " in desire " (*in voto*) is predicated of one who actually is *not* a member but would become one if he could.[30]

VII.

Let us review the ground we have covered. The adjective " mystical " is an historical accretion to the Pauline phrase " the Body of Christ " and it was never intended, in this connection, to signify an objective difference of meaning. The Mystical Body and the Body of Christ are variant names for one and the same doctrine; for more than a thousand years there did not exist even this terminological variation. The proper meaning of the Mystical Body is the meaning which the Apostle himself gave to the Body of Christ. This alone is the original and *revealed* concept of the Mystical Body. Extended concepts are those which to some extent deviate from that original meaning

[28] *Ibid.*, n. 705.

[29] Cf. *ibid.*, n. 1677-1678.

[30] Fr. O'Connor, urging the inclusion of all mankind in the Mystical Body, writes: " Potential being, we must not forget, is real being; and if the unbaptized are called potential members of Christ, this does not mean that they do not really belong to Him. They are really His members even if they are not actually united to him by grace or faith " (p. 470). Using " member " in such a meaning, we would have to say that there are *really* no non-Catholics in the world since all men are potential members of the Church also. When St. Paul spoke of the " members " of Christ he applied the term only to *actual* members; and in this sense of the word the familiar philosophical axiom is valid,—*A posse ad esse non valet illatio.*

and broaden the scope of its application. To conceive of the Mystical Body as merely an organizational or a spiritual or a redemptive term, without including the other equally essential elements of the original revealed metaphor, is an example of the formulation of such extended concepts.

The heart, therefore, of the whole doctrine of the Mystical Body, the divinely inspired metaphor around which all the extended concepts revolve, is the meaning which St. Paul himself gives to the Body of Christ. For him this means the visible society of the baptized, entrusted by Christ to the government of the Apostles and their successors, instinct with a divine life of grace, established by God as the one medium of man's salvation, formed and vivified and directed by the Holy Ghost as its indwelling Principle of life, one with its divine Redeemer and Head in the theandric unity of "one new man",[31] a "new creation",[32] the whole "Christ".[33] Its members are Jews and Gentiles together; not *all* Jews and Gentiles, but those whom baptism has incorporated into it.[34] That such is the Pauline concept of the Body of Christ is amply clear both from the words of the Apostle himself and from the authoritative interpretation of those words by the Holy See. Since it is difficult to see how the faithful departed can be said to be any longer included in this visible society, it is likewise difficult to see how they can be said to be any longer included in the visible Body of Christ which that society constitutes. For all who remain *viatores*, however, membership in this Body is necessary for salvation with the identical necessity which our Faith compels us to predicate of membership in the visible Church of Christ under its visible Head, the Roman Pontiff.

VIII.

To conclude. If this original and Pauline concept of the Mystical Body is kept clearly in mind and distinct from all the extended, analogous concepts which have gathered around it in the literature of the Mystical Body, there is no reason why a lack of clearness should attend our thoughts and words about this sublime doctrine. Nor will there be then any question of

[31] Eph. 2: 15-16.
[32] Gal. 6: 15.
[33] I Cor. 12: 12.
[34] I Cor. 12: 13. On this point cf. also n. 30, above.

the grievously heretical views to which such lack of clearness has, as a matter of fact, led in the past. When we employ the original Pauline concept we will recognize it for what it is,—God's way of revealing to us the full supernatural splendor of His Church. When we employ an extended concept of Christ's Body we will recognize that, too, for what it is,—a man-made adaptation of the original revealed metaphor, to illustrate the relation of our Savior to other groups of His creatures. In either case there is distinctness and clarity. Multiplicity of analogous concepts does not mean "necessarily . . . a certain vagueness" [35] if each of these concepts is clear in itself and the *analogatum primarium* is clearly recognized. The Mystical Body of Christ remains a divine Mystery, just as the Eucharistic Body which nourishes it is a Mystery. But the "mystery" in each case lies in the incomprehensibility of its intrinsic reality, not in the precise definition of its terms. Even the Mystery of the Blessed Trinity does not preclude a clear definition of its terms!

About the clearness which is possible and highly desirable in this doctrine, let me close with the words of an outstanding theologian of our time, Father Sebastian Tromp, S.J., the quality of whose judgment is attested by his position as *Qualificator* in doctrinal matters for the Holy Office: [36]

> Si interrogas Christianum debite instructum . . . quid sit Corpus Christi mysticum, respondere *potest et debet*: est Ecclesia Catholica et consequenter Romana. Roganti deinde, cur Ecclesia Romana nuncupetur Corpus Christi Mysticum, *respondendum est*: eam vocari *Corpus* Christi, cum sit organismus visibilis, a Christo institutus, et a Christo in suo Vicario visibiliter directus; eam vocari Corpus *Mysticum* Christi, cum illa organizatio in sese, in suis organis, in suis membris principio quodam invisibili a Christo immisso, ab ipso Spiritu Christi, et unificetur et vivificetur et Christo uniatur ac perfecte assimiletur. Haec omnia, ni fallor, clara sunt, quatenus mysteria clara dici possunt.[37]

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[35] Fr. O'Connor, *op. cit.*, pp. 455, 471-472.

[36] *Annuario Pontificio*, 1940, p. 691.

[37] *Corpus Christi Quod est Ecclesia*, Rome, 1937, pp. 156-157. First two italics mine.

DELEGATING PASTORAL POWERS OF DISPENSING.

Qu. I would like to propose for solution a question which the authors at present available to me do not seem to touch:

Can a pastor delegate to other priests his own power of dispensing the parishioners " a lege communi de observantia festorum . . . abstinentiae et jejunii " accorded him by canon 1245?

It would seem that this belongs to part of his ordinary jurisdiction, which in turn can be delegated in whole on in part, according to canon 199.

I am aware that there is a response from the Code Commission to the effect that the pastor cannot delegate anyone to hear the *confessions* of his parishioners, but it can be pointed out that this power has been expressly reserved to the ordinary by canon 874.

The principles seem clear enough, but in the lack of any explicit treatment of this particular application by the authors I would appreciate hearing your opinion of the case.

Resp. Canon 83 states that pastors cannot grant a dispensation from the general law, or even from a particular law, unless the power of dispensing has been expressly accorded to them. Canons 1044, 1045 and 1245 make express mention of this power on the part of pastors with reference to the Church's law regarding matrimonial impediments and also her laws regarding the obligations of the faithful in the matter of feast and fast day observance. This power attaches to the very office of pastor. Hence it is an ordinary power. Like all ordinary power it can be transmitted to others by way of delegation, either in whole or in part, provided only that the law has made no contrary provision against such a procedure (can 199, § 1).

Inasmuch as the law nowhere indicates a prohibition against such a procedure, the pastor may delegate the powers which canons 1044, 1045 and 1245 bestow upon him. Parochial assistants can thus be made the recipients of the pastor's powers in all the matters treated in these three canons. In fact, if the diocesan statutes or faculties do not already make such provision, it will be advisable in numerous instances for the pastor to share these powers with his assistants, so that in the event of his absence, or for other reasons which may preclude the possibility of his attending to the equitable requests of his parishioners for dispensations in these laws of the Church, his assistants will be

fully empowered to meet effectively all the needs which in these matters arise among the faithful.

Since the pastor can grant the needed dispensations in the non-sacramental as well as in the sacramental internal forum, he can delegate his assistants with a like power. But he may, especially when circumstances commend it, restrict the use of this delegated power to the sacramental forum. The use of this power in the confessional is a matter altogether distinct from the use of confessional jurisdiction. The latter kind of jurisdiction cannot be delegated by the pastor, for the text of canon 874, § 1, together with the official interpretation of it by the Code Commission on October 16, 1919 (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XI [1919], 477) makes it plain that a pastor needs a special power or authorization from the local ordinary before he can share his own confessional jurisdiction with others.

Precisely because the power enjoyed by a pastor, namely, to absolve from diocesan reserved sins during the entire time which is made available for the fulfillment of the Easter duty, involves a confessional jurisdiction, he cannot delegate this power to others unless he is expressly authorized by the local ordinary to do so. But in all non-confessional jurisdiction he is enabled by law to share his powers with his assistants. Hence he may delegate them with his own powers in all matters that touch the law of feast day observance, of fast, or of abstinence, either separately or conjointly The sole distinction between the power of the pastor and that of his assistants rests in the fact that what the former does by way of ordinary power the latter accomplishes by way of delegated jurisdiction.

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A NEW YORK RULING ON ANTE-NUPTIAL AGREEMENTS BEFORE MARRIAGE.

To the Editor, THE ECCLESIASTICAL REVIEW.

I believe the readers of the REVIEW will be interested in reading the following decision handed down by the Family Court Division of Richmond County, New York, Judge O'Brien presiding. The decision was given in Ramon *vs.* Ramon, 12 March, 1942.

From a consideration of the case, and the decisions herein cited, these rules of law are clearly established: (a) An ante-nuptial agreement providing for the Catholic faith and education of the children of the parties, in reliance upon which a Catholic has thereby irrevocably changed the status of the Catholic party, is an enforceable contract having a valid consideration; (b) the Court will take judicial notice of the religious and moral obligations of the parties; (c) the spiritual and Catholic training of a child amid religious persons or institutions of its own faith is paramount over any material considerations; (d) a holding that religious training of children may be dispensed with until they reach maturity upon the theory that they then may adopt any or no religion as they deem fit, is repugnant to our American background and traditions; (e) a court and especially the Domestic Relations Court is bound to approve the demand of a Catholic parent that its child be given a Catholic education and a Catholic upbringing in a Catholic home or institution, Domestic Relations Court Act, Art. 3, Sec 88; (f) the Court will take judicial notice that the Roman Catholic Church is the only church whose members are bound by its rules and discipline under penalty of excommunication to require Catholic training and education of their offspring; (g) the fact that a child, in violation of the ante-nuptial contract, has for a period of time been brought up in some other religion than that fixed in the ante-nuptial agreement, is not sufficient ground to deprive the respondent of his rights to have the child educated in the religion fixed by the ante-nuptial contract.

It is clear that the respondent is entitled to have the child brought up in the religion agreed upon in the ante-nuptial contract. It is equally apparent that the child being baptized Catholic is entitled to and must receive the training and education of that faith.

SACERDOS.

CATHOLIC DRAMA FOR THE PARISH.

A new glow and throb fills the veins of our Catholic stage today. Something is happening. Unmistakable and now of a telling size, an interest and enthusiasm for the cause of Catholic theatre have taken hold of the church in particular and even of the blasé world in general. For example, plays written by

Philip Barry, Paul Vincent Carroll, Henri Gheon, Paul Claudel, Urban Nagle, Emmet Lavery, Leo Brady, and others have proved to the public that Catholic themes are by no means negligible as dramatic material. Such schools as Catholic University of America, Loras College, Fordham University, and others have demonstrated the ability of Catholic groups, filled with intense zeal and activity, to reach " up " into the headlines. Broadway figures, Eddie Dowling, Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Robert Speaight, among others, have found it worth their while to carry excellent drama and good Catholicity onto the boards. If Catholic drama is now a growing tree, these are some of the large and strong roots; it remains for many more roots to reach into the soul of our whole land.

What has been said this far has possessed some of the glamor of the moment, the swift action, the famous names, its largeness, and brilliance; it still remains for us to see what the situation might be in the church in general, in parishes throughout the country, among those of us who are working in a smaller way.

The only preparation for such a consideration is, of course, this: to keep strong in us a receptive mood toward the idea of Catholic drama and a recognition of the fact that it deserves the specific attention and well-founded assistance of all the Catholic clergy. To reach that, it is pointless and unnecessary to offer any high-powered theorizing about the place of drama in a Catholic parish. The clearest appeal of the moment for the furtherance of this cause is simply this: that such drama, taken in the fullest and best sense of the term and presented in the best traditions of good stage, has every qualification for being a true fulfillment of the term " Catholic Action ". If this is true, then the way is open for every Catholic organization, the Catholic Youth Organization perhaps most of all, to make use of a vehicle so good and effective.

If you have accepted that apologia, we may turn to look at the condition of inactivity throughout the country in general, a view which proves rather depressing and startling. In all the great cities of the nation there are those which boast of a " Blackfriars " : Albany, New Haven, New York, Philadelphia, Troy and Washington; Catholic Theatre Guilds exist in Detroit, Louisville, Pittsburgh, Richmond, and San Francisco; other groups may be found in Baltimore, Grand Rapids, Chicago, and New York. This list from the Catholic Theatre Conference

seems to complete the names of cities. Among the parishes which have done noteworthy productions in the theatrical field, St. Ignatius in Chicago, St. Ignatius and St. Nicholas of Tollentino in New York, St. John's in Whiting, Indiana, St. Ann's in Baltimore, and some others are all worthy of mention. There are, of course, many other parishes carrying on dramatic activities, but it is in these named for the most part, that the most real progress has been shown. In too many parishes the year's work may be summarized by naming the presentation of *Hello Charlie! Such a Night!, Officer 999,* and some graduation exercises. This is the very sad and deplorable fact, that beyond these places mentioned above there is little evidence of true Catholic drama. It is remarkable that after such an article as Emmet Lavery's " The Plays are on the Shelves " in *America,* there should still be such a small proportion of Catholic material filling the halls of our parishes.

In defiance to this all too horizontal pose there is a practical idealism which dictates forceful motives for a change, for a quiet renascence which would put the name of Catholic drama into the forefront of Catholic Action. In the words of the theatrical world this quotation says much; "A theatre speaking for the Eastern metropolis, for the Midwest, the West, and the South, is increasingly necessary, not only for the few who can afford it, but for the many who cannot. . . . Such a theatre is at once an illustration and bulwark of the democratic form of government." The relation of the stage to the nation at large is evident; if we substitute " the teaching of our Faith " for the words on democracy, it is still true. Then, there is the motive embodied in all that must be prayed for in Catholic literature. The writings of Catholics have leaped to the fore in this growing Catholic Revival, but a vast deal remains to be done in the field of drama. On the one hand there is the worst condition of goods begging for an audience and finding none to support them. This accounts for the failure of such plays as Barry's *Joyous Season* and *Here Come the Clowns* and of O'Neill's *Days without End.* The church can make ample use of those men who can set forth the truths and principles of our Catholic Faith in a most attractive literary form, but we shall never have them if we do not give them the necessary encouragement and financial support. On the other hand, there is a large quantity of dramatic writing which is extremely poor stuff;

we need also some deeper training for those who wish to take up the writing of plays. These are the extremes: good dramatists failing to have our support and poor plays undeservingly clamoring for the help of Catholics.

A third motive is the worthwhile goal of training a Catholic audience in all the merits of true Catholic drama. Catholics, along with the rest of the world, have had and are having a modicum of training in the use of the imagination and in the appreciation of dramatic conflict through the medium of the radio and the motion pictures. It is not at all impossible to appeal to them by means of the stage, and whatever weakness they may have can serve as a further driving force to educate them in things cultural and educational. Now to this we may add a fourth motive: that which gives the parish priest the opportunity to train Catholic leaders. Catholic drama, if it is good at all, is a cooperative affair, one that demands the initiative, the zeal, and the work of all concerned. Young people who can be trained in the responsibilities of direction, stage-carpentry, make-up, and so on can be helped to carry that good quality into other phases of parochial activities. In brief, from every point of view, from that of Catholic literature, Catholic production, Catholic audiences, and Catholic Action in general, the motives for greater activity are forceful and unavoidable.

The accomplishment of these motives, however, will never be reached if something practical is not suggested. The first necessity in fulfillment of any such requirement is the presentation of some plays which would be good Catholic drama and which would be profitable in every way. A number of one-act plays are easily at hand for the Catholic producer, plays which conform to the best traditions of this form. Such are the plays of Laurence Housman, Emmet Lavery, J. M. Synge, Lady Gregory, and many others. Likewise, the children's plays of Kathryn Tynan, or of R. H. Benson, Sheila Kaye-Smith, Maurice Baring, and others offer good opportunities for the younger actors and actresses! If one looks into the field of the longer play, the possibilities are numerous enough to give the director a good choice of Catholic material. There are the strong and somewhat difficult plays of Philip Barry, *Joyous Season* and *Here Come the Clowns* and the even more forceful *Days Without End* of Eugene O'Neill. The religious plays of Father Urban

Nagle, O.P., and of Emmet Lavery are material attractive for any Catholic audience. A younger playwright, Mr. Leo Brady of Catholic University of America has done *Brother Orchid* and a newer social tragedy, *Calidore*. Violet Clifton's *Sanctity* is is not easy but extremely beautiful. Msgr. Benson's *The Upper Room* is well known to many; Father Lord's *Fantasy of the Passion* is another possibility for the Lenten season. The Irish plays of Padraic Colum, of Daniel Corkery, and of Lennox Robinson have, of course, a flavor and humor all their own. The more exacting plays of G. K. Chesterton, Maurice Baring, and T. S. Eliot are challenging tasks for any group but caution must be used in their choice. " The plays," as Mr. Lavery mentioned some time ago, " are on the shelves." There is not the plenty which an enthusiast for Catholic literature might wish, but there is a beginning sufficient for the zealous Catholic director.

After the play has been chosen, large possibilities remain in the realm of production. With regard to the theatre, a person might say that he has one or that he hasn't. Yet even here success has been attained where little at first might be expected. Perhaps the priest who has no representative stage might make use of a community theatre which is open for hire at a decent price. Catholic plays have thus found an audience more than once. When, after this, the problem of stage-design is considered for any theatre, the use of great simplicity is always to be preferred. A great deal can be achieved with simplest and most modest effects. Restraint, whether the daughter of poverty or not, is always an attribute of good theatre. If, however, the production is complicated and the help of others is most desirable, then here as in the whole task of production and direction, aids are at hand for any one who will ingeniously seek them. College graduates, experienced in such matters, are sometimes eagerly awaiting the invitation of the priest. Likewise, Catholic theatre people are often not at far call, working in some nearby civic or community theatre project; they would in many cases welcome the requests of the parish priest. In general there is always the possibility of finding the necessary cooperation, at least in the point of information, from the National Catholic Theatre Conference. The conclusion which is so obvious is a fruitful realization that much, very much, can be done for the

cause of Catholic drama, if the willingness, a modest imagination, and fiery zeal are there.

Whatever practical results this enthusiasm may show, let us wish that it will proceed according to those principles of action which are the foundation of any hope for the future of Catholic drama in the world today. Whether any of the plays suggested here are chosen is of little importance. The thing that counts is, in the first place, that plays be selected which possess some kind of good conflict; there must be something worth fighting for, whether the struggle is between God and man, between man and society, or in man himself. Further, it is far more advantageous to have a play with some evidence of appreciable theme rather than something of sheer plot. The story element is important but it is not the most lasting part of a production, for any worthwhile idea will outlast the most hair-raising of climaxes. To this we must add that while there must be a theme and that while this thesis may carry a moral, it may never do so at the expense of the dramatic worth of the play. In other words, the reproduction may teach the very best lesson in the world, but it must still be a good play; we dare never *substitute* the pious, the moral, the propagandizing, for that which is to entertain an audience. In brief, if the priest-director will remember that a good play is and can be shown to be as appealing as any poor play, if he will place the cause of Catholic literature well to the front of his plan of choice, then Catholic drama can expect to make great strides on its way to a worthwhile revival.

That the fulfillment of this ideal implies a number of difficulties is a thought of no surprise. In many cases an already overworked clergy will not be able to open a new and still more taxing program of theatre work. In other instances the men who now labor in this field are harassed by lack of experience, by unfamiliarity with the ways of production. Then, too, there are always the handicaps of royalty for all those groups who rightfully cannot fall back upon parish funds, who must build their own capital. Upon these we may pile up all the producing problems of language, casting, costume, or any others and we do have a serious consideration in this business of Catholic drama in the parish. But for each of these handicaps there is a possible remedy which is not too far away. There is the general help in play selection which may be obtained from the

National Catholic Theatre Conference. There is the more specific aid in problem of royalties which the same Conference is now working out. There is the guidance of excellent books in direction and production for the beginning priest. There is, for the busy priest, the help of many theatre-minded persons, for he must remember that drama is a community experience, one that is always better if it involves more people than a few. In almost each and every case there will be difficulties which are peculiar and unique to the parish and the place; taken together, they become so numerous that it is impossible to set down solutions for each. Objections can be raised so easily and in such great number that pages might be consumed in offering some help. With regard to this, the only safe and sensible answer is simply this: Catholic drama is succeeding in many places which have the same hardships as those brought up here. If others can do good things, then surely we may rightfully look for more.

Perhaps the best offer of practical aid which might be made to pastors generally is this notice which was received from Mr. Emmet Lavery, President of the National Catholic Theatre Conference. He writes "the Conference is now working on a model series of balanced programs for the early years of parish groups which might be a stimulus to many pastors." Many other aids might be noted and listed, but here again, the desires of individual pastors are so manifold and in many cases so unique that only the broadest guidance might be indicated.

Fundamental to the writing of this article has been a wish that is forthright and plain that the cause of Catholic drama in the parishes of our country might be served by it. That only a broad view has been taken is utterly plain. The reason for such a procedure is as obvious as a consideration of all the various difficulties that might be listed. Here, it is hoped, may be found not so much individual prescriptions and maps of action, but a clearer understanding of all the incentives and motives for better Catholic drama. The crying need of the moment is not so much an answer to this or that problem, to one individual hardship, but a deeper realization of the justness and worthiness of the cause. Given the proper enthusiasm and spirit, no obstacle can be too great. The greatness of a deed can never overcome the greatness of the heart.

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THE ORACLE OF THE VATICAN.

The intellectual confusion of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, after a Gargantuan travail, reincarnated a new dynasty of individualism whose coat of arms was adorned with the perennial brand of paganism, the personalized, humanistic and subsequently imperialistic pronoun "I". The newer paganism was a deep descent with loss and suffering from the heights attained by the older pagansm; and it was as far from the sublimity of the thirteenth century as man's animality is removed from his spirituality. The newer paganism was essentially that which had long dominated human creation, but it was fresher, more alert, less direct, less honest.

Inbred through a dozen generations since, this dynasty of individualism has come to the peak of its power in modern Europe amid the fogs and thundering storms of a genuine Gotterdämmerung, the twilight of the gods. Insidiously it has strengthened its grip on the affections and fears and problems of millions of people in spite of warnings that not in this way could relief be obtained but only added complications. The Oracle of the Vatican, urged on by custom and duty, spoke in warning. Emulating both words and meaning of the ancient warning inscribed on the palace walls as the inspired chronicler described them in the Fifth Book of Daniel,[1] the Papacy spoke. With an overpowering sense of shame we must confess that while the ancient warning troubled men's hearts and moved them to translate the meaning into understandable language and the language into action, the modern warning, though clear and unmistakable, has gone unheeded!

Alexander, Caesar, Attila, Genghis Khan, Napoleon, Bismarck, von Moltke, von Kluck, Hitler—they are all one, consecrated to serve man's will and only man's will. The ancient pagans were forthright; they followed a logical plan suited to paganism. As the blood-anointed high priests, prophets and effective military leaders for the complete expression of man's will, they killed and destroyed with logic. But the offshoots of Christianity have cut themselves from the parent stock and produced a botanical

1 Daniel V, 25-29.
Mane: God hath numbered thy kingdom and hath finished it.
Thecel: Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting.
Phares: Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.

monstrosity that is not truly pagan, not truly Christian. The essential animality of man, worshipping at its own altar of brute cravings, has always been a religion of ferocity. Gotterdämmerung, schrechlichkeit, blitzkrieg, Kulturkampf and *Mein Kampf* bridge the gaps back to antiquity.

The Masonic religionist Cavour, " uniting " Italy (" unite " and " untie " it is appropriate to remark have the same letters); the suave, gracious Metternich, plotting the overthrow of Napoleon; the persistently traitorous Talleyrand, who prattled (Heaven save the mark!) of " legitimacy; " the clutching, imperialistic Disraeli, accumulating opportunities for profits rather than opportunities for service; the patriotic yet ever anti-clerical Briand and Clemenceau—these have been the recent envoys of the new dynasty of individualism as well as the agents provocateurs of military might. The shocks of men and arms have followed as the night the day the intellectual battles and the diplomatic chicaneries which preceded. Those who stand on the side-lines of battle now peer uncertainly through the clouds of dust, stop their ears against the clamor and strive to keep from retching at the overpowering smell of human gore. It might have been otherwise, for the warnings were given; it may yet be otherwise if men will listen.

Seventy-eight years ago a modern *Mane-Thecel-Phares* was inscribed on the official documents of the Catholic Church in phaseology to be readily understood when Pius IX sent forth his *Syllabus of Errors.* Categorically he condemned eighty errors, destined unless corrected, to whirl the nations of the world into a shattering catastrophe. In some quarters the warning was well received, in others insultingly ignored, in still others submitted to clever ridicule. In England, the heart of an empire which fights now in agony for its life, Gladstone in his *Vaticanism* (1875) attacked, Newman in his *Letter To The Duke of Norfolk* (1875) elucidated and defended. In Germany where the drive to conquest under Bismarck was beating down all opposition, the *Syllabus* was hooted at as words not deeds. Quite generally the modern warning, unlike the ancient warning, was ignored.

In the year of world plenitude (1928) Harry Elmer Barnes called the *Syllabus* a . . . " systematic statement of this older

obscurantism."[2] Barnes also quoted the remark of Conybeare in which the collection of "errors" was described as "an admirable summary of the intellectual and scientific progress of the three previous centuries." The cocksure comment of these scholars printed in the year 1928 was followed, anticlimactically it would seem, by the year which offered convincing proof to the most obstinate that modern civilization would be extended thereafter only by the prayers and sacrifices of the pious and the longanimity of a beneficent God!

What was the *Syllabus?* In eighty cool and deliberate thrusts the Pope stabbed at the festering sores of modern life. Each thrust was stated as an error. Such an arrangement, coming from a source specializing in truth, might be understood by those specializing in error. The psychology seemed good, the timing, perhaps, not too accurate; hence the reception, as has been noted, varied. But what of the content? How did it check with the subsequent experiments and experiences of man?

The *Syllabus* states the chief errors in 1) religion; 2) liberalism; 3) indifferentism; 4) concerning the Church and her rights; 5) concerning civil society and government; 6) concerning ethics; 7) concerning marriage; 8) the temporal power of the Papacy; 9) further errors of liberalism.

The close of the nineteenth century witnessed the decline of governments as mechanisms for the control of men; the twentieth century has brought complete confusion in government with the superfluous agony of two World Wars. If we quote from category five the heedless, heartless mind of modern man will be revealed.

No. 39. The civil state, being the source and fountain of all rights, possesses a right which knows no limits.

40. The doctrine of the Catholic Church is opposed to the welfare and advantages of human society.

42. In case of conflict between the laws of both powers the civil law predominates.

44. Civil authority may interfere in things pertaining to religion, to morals and to spiritual government . . . .

47. The most perfect state of civil society requires that the common schools, which are open to all classes of the people, and the public institutions in general, which are destined for teaching letters and the exact science, and for educating youth, should be exempt from all authority, direction, and

[2] *Living in the Twentieth Century* by Harry Elmer Barnes. P. 56.

interference of the Church, and be subjected to the absolute power of civil authority, at the discretion of the rulers of the state and according to the standard of prevailing public opinion.

In category six we find this error stated:

59. Right consists in a material fact; and all human duties are an empty name, and all human facts have the force of right.

And this:

60. Authority is nothing else than numbers, and the result of material forces.[3]

So were the mistakes of modern man, his science and his thinking indicated seventy-eight years ago, long before the road to destruction became precipitous.

The courtly, scholarly Leo XIII, who as Cardinal had urged the uttering of the first warning in the *Syllabus,* repeated the warning in his Encyclical *Inscrutabili,* April 21, 1878. The second paragraph of that analysis of the Evils of Society as given by Husslein shows the dangers threatening mankind. The warning was again given before social disease reached the fever heat:

In fact, from the very first hours of Our Pontificate there was forced on us the sad spectacle of the evils which on all sides overwhelm the human race. We see about us the general subversion of the supreme truths on which human society is based as on its foundation; the stubbornness of mind which cannot endure any legitimate authority; the perpetual desire of dissension, from which arise intestine quarrels and cruel and sanguinary wars. We see the rejection of the rules which govern morals and ensure the carrying out of justice; the insatiable lust for transitory pleasures together with a forgetfulness of things eternal, reaching to such a degree of insensate fury that wretched beings dare to lay violent hands even on themselves. We see, further, the inconsiderate government of states, the lavish expenditure and malversation of the public funds, the impudence of those who from the moment that they commit the worst treason endeavor to pass for champions of liberty and of all the privileges of humanity; and finally, the deadly plague that penetrates into the very marrow of human society and leaves it no repose, threatening it ever with fresh revolutions and the most calamitous results.[4]

Should further proof be offered that the "obscurantism" of the Church is the obfuscation of overweeningly proud scholars,

[3] *Handbook of the Christian Religion* by W. Wilmers, S.J. Pp. 503-505.

[4] *Social Wellsprings* by Joseph Husslein. P. 2.

the kind of scholars who explain that creation was a "cosmic accident?" What a pity science has no wit; if it had this might be a sample of the music hall brand. Come to think of it: if science has "accidents," it may also have wit.

Since some schools of modern thinking have been forward enough to call the Church backward, they would not rise appreciably in professional standing if they were to clear their minds of prejudice and admit that while the Church can and does and should look backward, she also looks forward into eternity for which man is destined—and into time lest man annoyingly and unnecessarily increase the hazards of that journey?

What additional proofs are needed to convince modern man that he has been foolish to break with the Church?

What additional proofs are needed to convince modern man that it is folly to be invincibly stubborn in heaping error on error?

What additional proofs are needed to convince modern man that in any controversy between the Church and her critics the weight of the evidence turns them into laughingstocks?

What additional proofs are needed to convince modern man that courage and humility might bring him to exchange impudence for prudence?

What additional proofs are needed to convince modern man that while a younger generation resents any warning from an older, the Church has no generation and therefore must have her Founder, Who likewise has no generation, as her norm and goal when she gives a warning?

During war the Oracle of the Vatican falls silent; she had spoken in warning repeatedly before the war; she retires into the oratory with tears and prayers for thankless, headlong sons and daughters.

Let the flippant critic of the Church not misinterpret this silence. God's servant may be but God is not mocked!

> God hath numbered thy kingdom and hath finished it.
> Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting.
> Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.

The warning has been given; it has been repeated and repeated; historical facts have proved its worth. There is yet time to turn from folly.

Toledo, Ohio. EDWARD F. MOHLER.

Book Reviews

A GOSPEL HARMONY. By John E. Steinmueller, S.T.D., S.S.L. W. H. Sadlier, Inc., New York City. 1942. Pp. xl + 166.

A CHRONOLOGICAL HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS. By Stephen J. Hartdegen, O.F.M. St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, N. J. 1942. Pp. xxv + 220.

A HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS. By Rev. Newton Thompson, S.T.D. B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, Mo. 1942. Pp. xiii + 230.

These three Catholic harmonies of the Gospels came on the market at about the same time. They are to be welcomed as at least good beginnings for further work in a field admittedly difficult, and studded with problems which perhaps cannot all be definitely solved. To undertake a work such as the Gospel harmony requires courage and painstaking labor, and great credit is due to the authors. None of the harmonies, however, is an entirely fresh attack on the problem, for the authors acknowledge deep indebtedness to others: Father Thompson follows the order adopted by Fillion; Father Steinmueller acknowledges indebtedness to Hetzenauer and Ruffini, and Father Hartdegen to Lagrange, although he differs where Lagrange's position appears weak to him, e. g., one cleansing of the temple.

The Steinmueller Harmony is preceded by a general introduction. He studies the elements of the Synoptic problem and its various solutions, giving that which he considers the more probable—a form of the oral tradition hypothesis. The author might have given a clearer and more extensive treatment of the Catholic adaptation of the Two-Source Theory, even though he is not in favor of it. With the exception of some irrelevancies concerning Herod, the matter of the chronology of Christ is handled competently. The author believes that Christ was probably born in November 8 B. C., with Quirinius the Governor of Syria and Sentius Saturninus entrusted with the charge of registering Judea. He holds for four Passovers, and consequently in his analysis he allows for a ministry of three years plus several months, beginning in the 15th year of Tiberius, i. e., between 19 August 28 and 18 August 29 (Roman computation) and ending in the Spring of 33. As to the day of Christ's death, he follows the theory of anticipation.

The Hartdegen Harmony is divided: Outline of Chronology, index to each Evangelist, outline of the Public Ministry, the Harmony itself with preliminary notes, a list of contemporaneous events in Jewish,

Syrian and Roman history, a general index, maps of Palestine and Jerusalem and a plan of the Temple.

Hartdegen favors October or November, 7 B. C., as the time of Christ's birth, treats the problem presented by Matthew's and Luke's genealogical lists, holds for the transposition of John 6 (hence the sequence 4, 6, 5, 7) and so insists on a ministry of two years and some months beginning in January 28 and ending on April 7, 30 A. D. One of the helpful features is the richness in explanatory notes. A good, choice bibliography shows the reader where to turn for further information. The list of contemporaneous events serves to orient the Gospel events in their relation to contemporary world affairs. The using of St. John's Gospel as the framework of the harmony is commendable, as the harmony is thus built around the various Jewish feasts.

Father Thompson's Harmony is strictly a harmony, with passages when parallel in parallel columns. There are no notes, no theories nor hypotheses. After the harmony, however, he gives a textual index, a Sunday Gospels index and a subject index.

As is to be expected, there are many matters in the harmonies on which one can differ. A few points of difference between Steinmueller and Hartdegen: the use of John's prologue (S), Luke's (H); the exorcism of the demoniac and the healing of Peter's mother took place before the first miraculous draught of fishes (S), after the draught (H); the anxiety of Christ's relatives is placed after the section on Christ's teaching in parables (S), before (H). The three authors hold for two cleansings of the temple. To this reviewer, it appears that of these three books, Hartdegen's will be of more service to the general reader.

HERESY AND INQUISITION IN NARBONNE. By Richard Wilder Emery, Ph.D. New York: Columbia University Press. 1941. Pp. 184.

Narbonne, the archiepiscopal see of Languedoc, escaped for the most part the rigors of the Inquisition in the thirteenth century. Scholars have never succeeded in finding the reason for this. The author of this Columbia University dissertation sets out to make a thorough investigation of Narbonne in the period with a view of determining its attitude toward heresy and the reason for its immunity from the Inquisition. The sources are comparatively rich and Dr. Emery has worked in various archives of France as well as in the printed materials. He lays a broad foundation for his thesis, studying the topography of the bourg and city of Narbonne, the political and economic organization, the none too edifying history of the archbishops of the see in the early thirteenth century, and the history of the foundations of the various religious orders that labored in Narbonne. For the outbreak in the bourg against the Inquisition (1234-1237) he has a more pene-

trating study than that offered by Guiraud. He minimizes heresy as the cause of the uprising and stresses political and financial reasons. He shows against his predecessors that the bourg was really not defeated in this struggle. As for the later part of the century Emery holds that Narbonne escaped the Inquisition not because there was no heresy but because the royal power was not in control there to back the archbishop if he had pressed prosecutions.

Evidence to prove his theory is thin. If heresy was unimportant in Narbonne in the period of the uprising, perhaps it was even less obtrusive later in the century. In mixing the French and English forms of names the author lays himself open to a criticism which Lord Acton made of Lea. He speaks of St. John but of St. Sebastien and the martyrs Just and Pasteur (pp. 20-21). There are trivial slips in the typography: p. 59, l. 12; p. 114, ll. 2-3; p. 126, n. 71; p. 130, n. 83; p. 132, n. 93. On p. 176 *read* Aragonensia; on p. 177 *read* Pressutti. The new edition of Heimbucher should have been used.

The author writes with admirable objectivity. He has a mature touch, and further contributions from him on the history of southern France would be welcome.

THE VATICAN COUNCIL AND THE AMERICAN SECULAR NEWSPAPERS, 1869-70. By J. Ryan Reiser, Ph.D. Catholic University Press, Washington, D. C. Pp. vii + 327.

The present volume is noteworthy not only as a philosophical treatise but also as a piece of interesting reading. Doctor Reiser has written entertainingly, a quality too seldom found in works of this scholastic nature.

The Introduction, as it should, sets the stage for the procession of press sentiment which the author parades across it. The Vatican Council met at a time when the world was plagued by many false philosophical " isms ", some of them in conflict with others, but all in agreement in their antipathy to the Catholic Church. Since the Council, its figures and its decisions made prime targets, they were made the subject of bitter attack, the object of ridicule, the butt of crude witticisms. In particular, the Doctrine of Papal Infallibility occasioned quite a bit of caustic comment in American editorial columns, despite the fact that the writers apparently, and in some instances admittedly, had no thorough understanding of the doctrine's confinement to matters of faith and morals.

In the book, the press comments, or, more truly, attacks, are broken down according to the sections of the country, a device which is valuable because the sections varied both in the percentage of Catholic population and in religious intensity. Various tables and a complete index, adding a reference quality, increase the already high value of the work.

EFFICIENT CAUSALITY IN ARISTOTLE AND ST. THOMAS. By Francis X. Meehan, Ph.D. Catholic University Press, Washington, D. C. 1940. Pp. xxii + 424.

In the introduction to this treatment of the aristotelian and thomistic doctrine on efficient causality, the author formulates his objective in a quotation from Aristotle's metaphysics: " One must be content to state some points better than one's predecessors and others no worse." The elaborate analysis of the comparative positions of St. Thomas and Aristotle in regard to the problem of efficiency and its ramifications fully achieves the exacting ideal.

The careful re-examination of efficient causality is particularly needed in these times because of the gross misconception of the causal idea in modern philosophy and science. Not only the progress of philosophic thought, but the progressive development of each science as well, depends upon a correct and precise formulation of the idea of cause, the life-nerve of all sciences.

To obtain the " distinct advantage of offering in unbroken continuity the integral theory of each " the author considers the thought of Aristotle and of St. Thomas separately and uninterruptedly in two successive and closely paralleled sections, parts one and two of the dissertation. " The force of the comparison that would seem to be lost in this approach " is " compensated for by explicit animadversions in the parallel sections of the second part as well as by the use of a brief supplementary conclusion that brings together in focus the similarities and differences."

The following points are discussed in the closely paralleled chapters: general importance of causality in the mind of each; historical background in telescoped perspective; general causal theory and place of efficient cause; efficient cause itself, its definition, the precise character and indispensable conditions of its causality; the reality of efficiency with special reference to the efficiency of the prime cause and secondary agents.

The treatment of aristotelian efficiency and its implications as emended, modified, and renovated by St. Thomas, is exceptionally good and well substantiated with apt quotations from both philosophers. The notes indicate the vastness of the research demanded in every period and field of thought. Many of these notes are brilliantly suggestive; for example, the discussion of Algazel's anticipation of the human reduction of the ontological nexus between cause and effect to a connection of mere psychological expectation. We may hope that this provocative historical study may prod some other able thinker into developing the theoretical aspects of efficiency with the same thoroughness, authority, and finality.

Book Notes

The famine of liturgical and theological books of the last war will not be repeated in this second world war because of the skill and resourcefulness of American publishers. The volumes that have thus far appeared compare favorably with the product of the traditional houses in Italy, France and Germany. It might also be remarked that the prices are not excessive.

Benziger Brothers have published a *Missale Romanum* that has attracted a great deal of attention, and received favorable comment on its typographical workmanship. This firm is also publishing an American-made *Breviarum Romanum, Office of the Blessed Virgin,* altar cards and several rituals. Frederick Pustet Company, Inc. announce that they have in preparation a "Made in U.S.A." *Missale Romanum,* which will be a reproduction of the Ratisbon edition. They also announce a *Missae Defunctorum,* an *Officium Parvum B.M.V.,* and separate Offices of Christmas and Epiphany, Pentecost and Corpus Christi, and Holy Week.

The Edward O'Toole Co. has published a *Little Office of the Blessed Virgin* in Latin with English rubrics. It is 3 x 5 inches, printed in 12 point type, clear and legible. The seasonal changes are conveniently placed. The Office of the Dead is omitted. (New York. Pp. xx + 129.)

Seminarians, who had been forced to borrow copies of the Code from reluctant pastors and priest friends, will welcome the American-made reprint of *Codex Iuris Canonici.* It is 5 x 6½ inches, printed on a good grade of paper in quite readable type. The edition is published with the special permission of the Holy See. (Newman Book Shop, Westminster, Md. 1942. Pp. lv + 928.)

The 1943 Christian Life Calendar, prepared by Father William Puetter, S.J., is quite up to the standard of former years in spite of war and priorities. This *Calendar* is an excellent ordo for the layman. It should be better known. (The Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee. Price, $1.00.)

The Grail, St. Meinrad, Indiana, offer *The Mass Year* for 1943 to laymen who pray the Mass with a daily missal. The *Ordo* for the Mass is clear and gives all required information. The second part of the booklet gives a digest of the liturgical seasons, adapted from the works of Dom Prosper Guéranger. An outline of the history, the mystery signified by the liturgy, and pious practices appropriate for the season are given for Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Paschal Time, and Pentecost. Pastors will be doing a real act of kindness to mention *The Mass Year* and *The 1943 Christian Life Calendar* to their parishioners who use the daily missal. (Pp. 125. Price, 30c.)

The Benedictines of St. John's Abbey are to be commended for their courageous decision to edit and publish *A Short Breviary.* This is a second edition, but the first was practically a private printing which was exhausted in less than a year.

The book contains the Psalter, the Common of Feasts, the Proper of the Season and of the Saints, the Saturday Office of the B.V.M. and two explanatory appendices. In the Psalter are ninety-six psalms attractively presented. Matins is sharply abbreviated, so there is little from the second nocturns and the homilies of the Fathers. Emphasis is given to the Proper of the Season, and the liturgical element is preserved so that *A Short Breviary* is kept in harmony with the Roman Breviary. The editors have succeeded in attaining a simplicity of arrangement that makes the "office" intelligible to the layman.

Undoubtedly many of our readers have some parishioners ripe for an "enlargement of their prayer horizon". To them *A Short Breviary* can be recommended without qualification. Dom Godfrey Dickmann believes that this *Short Breviary* is the greatest single advance in popular participation since publication of the vernacular missals. This reviewer is inclined to agree with him, but believes that the field is much more restricted. Incidentally, the cost of the

book is quite reasonable. (The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minn. 1942. Pp. viii + 766.)

The School of Mary by Reverend John A. Kane is a collection of forty short meditations on the Mother of God. It is in the same style as the author's *The School of Love*, and those who profited by this book of meditations on the Holy Eucharist will welcome Father Kane's latest devotional manual. (St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, N. J. 1942. Pp. xvii-248. Price, $2.00.)

Any book by Sister Julie of Notre Dame is a welcome addition to ascetical literature. Her strong yet gentle and restrained style added to her fine knowledge of what is spiritually important, makes her books pleasant reading and worthy of serious attention. Her latest volume, *A Book of Simple Words* is on the same high plane as *Lucent Clay* and her others essays. There is love and broad understanding, and the reader is helped to learn the tender sympathy of the divine Master for the trials of the human heart. (P. J. Kenedy & Son, New York City. Pp. x + 240.)

Father William H. Russell's wholehearted desire is to help men to understand the Person of our Lord. In the second little volume of *Chats with Jesus*, Father Russell presents twenty-four meditations of considerable depth and power to help those whose daily lives are all too often filled with worldly plans. In several of the meditations the vocabulary is on the college level, which may or may not affect its usefulness. Priests will find many a hint for a *ferverino* in the *Chats*. (P. J. Kenedy & Sons, New York City. Pp. 151.)

The Way of the Blessed Christ was written by Father Vincent Kienberger, O.P. to help the reader live in the Spirit of Christ. There are thirty-five short essays on the humanity of Christ, His friends and earthly companions, His divinity and majesty, His suffering and death. Father Kienberger has the art of writing appealingly and convincingly, as readers of the REVIEW know, and we venture to predict that this will be a popular book of meditations. Archbishop Stritch has written a thoughtful Foreword. (Longmans, Green & Co., New York City. 1942. Pp. xii + 260.)

Spiritual Readings from Mother St. Paul is a one-volume selection from her *Christi* books. The publishers reveal that the stock of *Christi* books was destroyed in the London bombing and fire of December 1940, and there is little likelihood of their being reprinted under war conditions. Mother St. Paul's writings are so well known to our priest readers that it is only necessary to repeat approvingly the publisher's assertion that the " reader now has in one volume the very essence of Mother St. Paul's writings, formerly spread throughout a dozen or more books. (Longmans, Green & Co., New York City. 1942. Pp. xii + 308.)

Dr. William H. Doheny, C.S.C. has placed English-speaking Catholics decidedly in debt to him by translating and editing *The Pater Noster of St. Teresa*. It is a scientific piece of work, but Dr. Doheny has been careful to keep the trappings of scholarship from obtruding and lessening the value of the book to help those desirous of making greater progress in the way of perfection. As Archbishop Kiley points out in his Preface, the golden maxim of St. Teresa was: " The essential point is not to think much, but to love much." This little book will help to emphasize that truth. (Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee. 1942. Pp. x + 150.)

Surnaturelle Sagesse by Rev. Clément Morin, S.S. is a doctoral dissertation, based on the author's studies of St. Thomas. After an introduction, St. Paul —the master of wisdom, the author divides his study into three parts. Part I has three chapters: Sagesse en Dieu; Sagesse de Dieu en Nous; Sagesse Prédestinée. Part II considers the *la gloire par la Croix* as the principle of wisdom and studies that principle in the Gospels, the Epistles and the works of St. Thomas. In Part III is considered the fruit of wisdom—our configuration to Christ. This is quite different from the usual doctoral thesis in theology, but the average reader will probably find it much more interesting. The French is not difficult. (Grand Seminaire, Montreal, Canada. 1942. Pp. 214.)

By eliminating chapters and other demarcations in his *Pageant of the Popes*, John Farrow emphasizes the continuity of the papacy from Peter to Pius. It is a biographical dictionary of the popes, written for the average reader in a style that has a cinema flavour. There is no sensationalism although he does use more space than one would expect in such an outline on the nepotism and other frailties of certain pontiffs. His treatment of these incidents, however, is likely to impress the non-Catholic reader with his objectivity. And he explains succinctly and well such misunderstood things as the Galileo incident, the Inquisition, infallibility, papal neutrality, etc.

As might be expected, there are a number of minor errors. The style is easy, but at time the choice of words is not dexterous. He speaks for example, of an archbishop being "raised to the scarlet", and of a pope who could not "sport" a coat of arms. A planned reading of the *Catholic Encyclopedia* would give a better short biography of the popes, but Mr. Farrow's volume will be profitably read by many who would never think of taking the time and trouble to consult more than one volume. It is a readable book that undoubtedly will be popular. (Sheed & Ward, New York City. 1942. Pp. 420. Price, $3.50.)

By compiling and publishing *Poetry and Life*, Frank J. Sheed brought to fruition an excellent idea. This is an anthology of English Catholic poetry under selected subjects "covering the shape of man's life", thus discovering "what man's life has looked like to the Catholic poets."

The book is divided into two parts. I—The Context of Human Life: God, the Creation, the Fall of Man; the Incarnation; the Passion and Redemption; the Last Judgment. II—The Life of Man: The Kind of Being Man is; The Kind of Thing Life is; Love, Marriage and Virginity; The Beauty of the World; The Pain of the World; Religion (The Soul and God, The Soul and Christ, The Blessed Virgin, The Church, The Reformation); Death; After Death. Under these heads are selections from Catholic poets of the past twelve centuries chosen with discrimination and an excellent sense of values. Only one poet of the present century is quoted—Alice Meynell.

There is an Index of first lines and a biographical index. In his Preface, Mr. Sheed gives the plan of the book, and a delightful little essay on what the poet does and learning to read poetry. This book is worthy of unqualified recommendation. (Sheed & Ward, New York City. 1942. Pp. xvii + 187. Price, $2.50.)

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CODEX IURIS CANONICI PII X PONTIFICUS MAXIMI. Edition published in the United States with the special permission of the Holy See. The Newman Book Shop, Westminster, Md. 1942. Pp. lv + 928. Price, $2.50.

NOVA SCOTIA. THE LAND OF CO-OPERATION. By Leo R. Ward, C.S.C. Maps by Leroy Appleton. Sheed & Ward, New York City. 1942. Pp. xiii + 207. Price, $2.50.

A BOOK OF SIMPLE WORDS. By A Sister of Notre Dame de Namur. P. J. Kenedy & Sons, New York City. 1942. Pp. vi + 240. Price, $2.00.

THE WAY OF THE BLESSED CHRIST. By the Reverend Vincent Kienberger, O.P. Foreword by Archbishop Samuel Stritch, S.T.D. Longmans, Green & Co., New York City. 1942. Pp. xii + 260. Price, $2.25.

A Short Breviary for Religious and the Laity. Edited by Monks of St. John's Abbey. Second Edition. The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minn. 1942. Pp. viii + 766. Price, $2.85.

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The Christian Life Calendar 1943. By Rev. William H. Puetter, S.J. The Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee, Wis. Pp. 64. Price, $1.00; prices in quantities.

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Surnaturelle Sagesse. By Clément Morin, P.S.S. Grand Séminaire de Montréal, Montréal, Canada. 1942. Pp. 214.

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Pamphlets of Our Sunday Visitor Press, Indiana. *The Search for God.* By Rev. John A. O'Brien, Ph.D. *Little Prayers With Plenary Indulgences.* Compiled and edited by Rev. Francis J. Mutch. *Conquering With Christ.* By Rev. John J. Walde. *The Victory of the Just.* By Rev. John F. Cronin. (Pp. 24, 22; price, 5c each; Pp. 36, 26; price, 20c, 15c.)